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Understand the GST when you trade-in vehicles

Farmers who trade in one farm vehicle on another could be unpleasantly surprised when they claim the GST on the transaction, unless they fully understand the steps in calculating the tax says an Alberta Agriculture economist.

"The confusion comes because the farmer can't just claim the GST paid on the new vehicle, but must also account for the GST on the vehicle traded in," says George Monner, regional farm economist in Fairview.

Some dealerships, he says, are still writing up new vehicle purchases with a trade-in as follows. The new truck costs $13,000. The trade-in value of the used vehicle is listed at $10,000. The farmer pays the difference of $3,000, plus the GST on the listed price of the new truck of $910, to the dealer. Then, the farmer claims the $910 GST refund.

"What some farmers may fail to recognize is that Revenue Canada will have deemed them as collecting GST from the dealer on the trade-in," says Monner. "It's the responsibility of the business selling the vehicle, in this case the farmer trading in the truck, to collect from the purchaser, the dealership."

If the sales agreement doesn't say otherwise, then it's assumed that the trade-in value of the vehicle includes any GST payment he adds. In the example situation, $654.20 in GST is part of the stated $10,000 trade-in value.

"To keep bookkeeping accurate, a proper invoice should show the GST on the trade-in as part of the transaction. The net paid by the farmer to the dealer is the same, but the farmer's total cost is more because the net GST the farmer can claim is less," says Monner.

The previous example should have been invoiced this way: new truck cost—$13,000; less trade-in value—$9,345.80; plus GST on new truck—$910; less GST on trade—$654.20; with the amount paid to the dealer—$3,910.

The farmer's net GST refund will be $255.80—the GST on the new truck minus the GST on the trade—not, the $910 of the first case.

"The difference between the two invoices is the perceived trade-in value. In the first case you think you're getting more than you actually are," he says.

Vehicle dealerships, and other businesses who buy used goods for resale as part of normal business activities, get their GST refund on the purchase of any vehicle that is bought for resale even if they don't have to pay the amount to the seller. "This would be the case if the sales transaction involved a producer that hasn't got a GST registration number," he notes.

Contact: *George Monner*
835-2291

First farm womens' professional development workshop scheduled

Alberta farm women can attend a first of its kind workshop next month, February 7 and 8, in Canmore.

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

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IT

Billed as a farm womens' professional development weekend, the workshop is an opportunity for farm women to gain knowledge about themselves and others, while building skills for rural leadership. As an added bonus the workshop has a retreat setting.

A professional facilitator will lead participants through a time tested method of identifying behavioral styles. "The objective for participants is learning their preferred way of doing things, recognizing other people have their own preferences, appreciating those differences and applying knowledge about those behavior styles to their lives," says Lynne Nieman, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Fort Saskatchewan.

"This skill is something farm women can then use in their family life, in their farm business and in the rural organizations they belong to. They'll be able not only to see and identify a negative shoot-down-all-ideas attitude across the table, but use this knowledge in presenting ideas and alternatives to the nay-sayer they may encounter," adds Nieman, chair of the workshop's planning committee. "As the conference brochure puts it, success in family, farm and groups is linked to personal communication and interaction with others. When you know your own special traits—and, the workshop will give you knowledge about that—you can achieve positive results in initiating and managing change."

Another positive aspect of the workshop is its cost notes Nieman. The registration is $90 (based on double occupancy), and this includes all workshop materials, meals and the hotel room. "The workshop is selling itself as good learning, good company and good food for only $90," says Nieman.

Open to all farm women, the workshop is a co-operative effort of Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Cattle Commission and the Alberta Wheat Pool. Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices. The registration deadline is January 17.

Contact: *Lynne Nieman*
998-0190

Final provincial quilt competition next month

The fifth, and perhaps final, annual provincial quilt competition finals will come to Edmonton next month.

Formerly the Canada Packers Alberta Quilt Competition Finals, the contest annually featured up to 20 of the province's best quilts. The competition finalists qualified for the provincial competition by winning top honors at local Alberta Association of Agriculture Societies (AAAS) fairs.

"When Canada Packers was sold, our sponsor disappeared. The AAAS and Alberta Agriculture sponsored this year's competition while a new major sponsor was sought. Unfortunately to date, no new sponsor has been secured," says Eve Cockle of the AAAS.

"However," she adds, "This finals will give the quilters and quilts excellent exposure as the competition quilts will be displayed at West Edmonton Mall." All 11 of the 1991-92 local competition finals quilts will be on display at West Edmonton Mall from February 14 through February 16.

"There are number of familiar names on the finalists' list. Seven of the 11 have been finalists in the past two years," says Cockle. "The competition has improved the quality of quilting in the province and each year the final reflects this, as we seem to have quality rather than quantity."

The top three prize winners of the 1991-92 competition will be announced on Saturday February 15 at the annual AAAS awards banquet.

A traditional part of the competition finals, quilting workshops will continue in 1992 she notes. Four workshops will be presented over the two days.

Two day long workshops are scheduled for February 14. Calgary fibre artist and quilter Anne Severson will teach quilters about Amish quilts and color. Participants will create their own small quilt during the day using color and design principles that produced old masterpieces. Displays and discussions will provide an in-depth background on the Amish lifestyle and their singular approach to quilt making.

The second day long workshop features an unusual variation of the traditional log cabin quilt block. Participants will learn the pleated log cabin cushion from Wilma Davison. "This particular technique adds texture and gives the quilt block a three dimensional look," says Cockle.

"Both of these workshops have limited space. The Amish quilt workshop has a limit of 20 people and the pleated log cabin session a maximum of 15," notes Cockle.

A morning and afternoon workshop are scheduled for February 15. In the morning Judy Villet, an Edmonton based designer and instructor, will talk about "bending the rainbow, color wheel basics". Color theories and guides to color combinations will be examined. In the afternoon, participants will learn about tender, loving care for quilts with Teresa Brunner. Each of these workshops have a 50 person maximum.

Also part of the Saturday activities is a fashion show of quilted garments. The Edmonton Quilter's Co-op, Edmonton Quilters' Guild and St. Albert Quilters' Guild are putting together the luncheon show.

All of the workshops will be held at the Europa Conference Centre in West Edmonton Mall. The registration deadline is January 15.

Information about the competition finals and workshops can be directed to Cockle in Edmonton at 427-2174.

Contact: *Eve Cockle*
427-2174

Finalists AAAS Provincial Quilt Competition—1992 Local Winners

Host ag society	Winner
Springbank	Goldie Berreth, Calgary, 271-2360
Westlock & district	Audrey R. Wiedrick, Westlock, 349-5508
Spruce Grove	Ethel Suder, Spruce Grove, 962-2870
Yellowhead	Connie Bjorkquist, Jasper, 852-5654
Calgary Ex.& Stampede	Jean Gray, Calgary, 242-5924
Provost & district	Doris Heck, Provost, 753-2873
Raymond & district	Rina Motycka, Raymond, 752-4251
Smoky River	Lucille Lemire, Girouxville, 323-4359
Westerner Exposition	Shirley Mills, Red Deer, 347-7425
Edmonton K-Days	Sharon Harder, Sherwood Park, 464-5701
Fairview	Dorothy Burkholder, Bluesky, 835-2856

Communication Crime Watch conference theme

Rural Crime Watch members will have the message "communication is the key to crime prevention" reinforced at their annual provincial workshop next month.

"The workshop agenda will feature a number of different topics related to communications," says Cliff Munroe of the Alberta Farmers' Advocate Office. The workshop will be hosted by the Rangeland Rural Crime Watch Association in Hanna on February 7 and 8.

Munroe is one of the conference speakers and will talk about communication systems that work for Rural Crime Watch associations. Some groups have had success with the computer fan out system that provides immediate communication between the RCMP and local association members.

Also on the program is Staff Sergeant Gary Lindstrom of the RCMP. Lindstrom has a long association with Rural Crime Watch and will talk about its roots and future directions of the organization.

Looking at communication outside Crime Watch specifically, are Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan and Ed Curry of the Western Stock Growers Association. McClellan will discuss communicating with government and Curry, communicating with other organizations.

Other speakers include lawyer Colin Simmons on wills, estates and trespassing and Dave England with a report on the Report a Poacher program.

"Time is also set aside during the workshop for groups to share what has been going on in their local organization. This is a good opportunity for participants to learn about what ideas and activities have worked for associations around the province," says Munroe.

Resolutions from a number of associations will be presented to the provincial meeting. If passed, the resolutions are forwarded to the appropriate level of government for consideration.

For more information, contact the conference co-ordinator Cathy Bell in Drumheller at 823-9462, or Dave Cattanach, Hanna RCWA president, at 854-2435.

Contact: Cliff Munroe 427-2433
Cathy Bell 823-9462

Management focus continues at MAP'92

Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) will continue to provide a forum for farm owners and managers to discuss current and future management issues says the conference's 1992 chair.

"MAP'92 will carry on its tradition as a management issues conference for farmers who want to sharpen their management skills," says Doug Barlund of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch. "Our setting in Kananaskis is an ideal atmosphere for concentrating on issues related to managing a family business."

This year is the 15th anniversary of the MAP conferences, formerly known as Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP). Under the umbrella theme of farm business is family business, the conferences have offered diverse sessions to farm couples covering up-to-date financial, production, human resource, marketing and management information.

"With our emphasis on issues related to a family business, this conference provides an excellent opportunity to strengthen family business management teams. These turbulent times may be the best reason to work on values, goals and strategies for your business," says Barlund.

Two return speakers will also be on the agenda. 1991's key note speaker Don Jonovic will discuss managing success in the family business and effective transfer of business assets and management. Bill McLeod, who was in the 1990 conference line-up, will talk about insurance for effective estate planning and business transfer.

Saskatchewan farmer Don Lidster discussing business goal setting and Calgarian Dixon Thompson, on the environmental issues affecting Canadian business, will round out the management topics at the conference.

Brochures and registration forms for MAP'92 are now available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. As well, interested persons can contact Barlund or Trish Pannell in Olds at 556-4240. MAP'92 is co-sponsored by the Rural

Cont'd on page 4

Education Development Association (REDA) and Alberta Agriculture with additional assistance from the private and public sectors.

Contact: *Doug Barlund*
556-4240

It's not too early for crop planning

(Sixth in a series)

Farm work changes seasonally, but farm business planning should continue year round says an Alberta Agriculture farm management specialist.

"While planning is a continuing activity, winter is a good time for farm decision makers to concentrate on planning," says Craig Edwards, of the farm business management branch in Olds. "Farmers who want to take a comprehensive farm management course through the winter should register for Alberta Agriculture's Gear Up Advantage course as soon as possible.

"The course is an enjoyable way to learn about production, human resources, financial and marketing planning this winter," he says. Gear Up Advantage includes planning for the whole farm. Information about the course is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Alberta Agriculture also has assistance for farmers not able to attend the course, but who are interested in business planning. "It's sometimes difficult to know where to start, but I want to stress that planning activities and developing written plans is time well spent," Edwards says.

He suggests farmers start with an Alberta Agriculture crop choice worksheet. The worksheet guides the farmer through making a separate budget for each crop, showing variations for different levels of fertilizer application, seeding rates and weed chemicals. It provides a good start for estimating yields, prices and costs, he says.

The worksheets are designed for farmers to use with their own estimates of expected revenues and input costs per crop. The sheets give no typical costs, but provide a format as a reminder of all costs that might be included in the estimates.

Edwards advises making copies of the sheets for every crop the farmer considers growing and to use separate sheets to show high, medium and low input levels.

"The worksheets can be used to compare expected returns (yield times price) over expected variable costs for each crop. Comparing different levels of production intensity after calculating expected yields and prices for each level will help in the decision of how much to attempt to grow, how to grow the crop and what to grow," Edwards says.

"The factsheets also provide explanations for using the worksheets to the farmer's best advantage as they plan," says the economist. When completed for each crop, the worksheets provide the basic cost calculations required to make decisions. When the decisions are made, the cost calculations can be summarized for the following year including a projected cash flow.

The fact sheet, "Planning with crop choice worksheets" (Agdex 815-2), is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or from the Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

The farm business management branch has also developed two publications as a planning package. One is "Gauge: A year end do it yourself financial package" and the other, "Farm financial planning worksheets". These may be available at district offices, or from Edwards at Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

Contact: *Craig Edwards*
556-4248

Agri-News briefs

Western Canadian economic conference on food industry Feb. 9-10

The 12th annual Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry will be held February 9 and 10 at the Marlborough Inn in Calgary. "Growth in the '90s: Blueprint for success" is the theme of the conference. Current information on factors influencing markets, strategies for low cost production, implementation of total quality management plans and business plan preparation are on the conference agenda. Federal Agriculture Minister Bill McKnight will address the conference theme on Sunday evening. Leaders at all levels of the food and beverage industry, as well as those in related organizations, will find the conference of interest. For more information, contact the Rural Education Development Association (REDA) at 451-5959, or Ron Pettitt at Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton at 427-7325.

When generations farm together presentation in Wetaskiwin

When generations farm together is the subject of a special post-Christmas family event slated for Wetaskiwin on January 10. A roast beef meal is followed by program featuring Alberta Agriculture specialist Garry Bradshaw. For more information, contact the Alberta Agriculture Wetaskiwin district office at 361-1240.

ACC honors Hargrave as 1991's Distinguished Cattleman

A Walsh, Alberta rancher was presented with the Alberta Cattle Commission's 1991 Distinguished Cattlemen's Award. Bert Hargrave is the third recipient of the award, presented from time to time to acknowledge special industry friends. Involved with the family ranch all of his life, Hargrave is a past president of the Western Stock Grower's Association and Canadian Cattlemen's Association. He also served 12 years as a Member of Parliament and was involved in a number of issues related to the cattle industry including the Crow debate, opposing supply management in the beef industry, a meat import act, the meat grading system and trade issues. For more information, contact Gary Sargent or Joanne Lemke in Calgary at 275-4400.

Farm accounting standardization seminars

Two seminars on streamlining farm accounting standardization will be held in January and February. The first is scheduled for January 15 in Edmonton and the second in Airdrie on February 12. The seminars are designed for extension specialists, college instructors, academics and farm management consultants who teach farm financial management. The seminars were developed as a result of the consensus study on accounting terminology undertaken by Deloitte & Touche under the supervision of the Farm Credit Corporation. Speakers at the day long seminars are Don Hoover, an agricultural consultant, and Brock Allison, a chartered accountant. Seminar materials will include a comprehensive study binder and the Farm Accounting Standardization (FAS) manual. The FAS seminars are a co-operative project of Alberta Agriculture, Agriculture Canada, the Farm Credit Corporation and Serecon. For more information, contact Hoover in Edmonton at 448-7440.

Video features Spruce Meadows

A new addition to Alberta Agriculture's film library provides a look at the renowned Spruce Meadows. Some of the facility's internationally acclaimed events are featured in the 10 minute presentation, "Home of the Classics" (VT 469-2). Included are Masters' showjumping and the relatively new feature, Battle of the Breeds, a showcase of Alberta Breeds for the World. For loan information, write the Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Alberta weed specialist receives excellence award

Baeverlodge-based Lloyd Darwent is one of two recipients of an annual Excellence in Weed Science award. The Agriculture Canada scientist received the award for his applied research and extension work. Darwent has looked at weeds in forage crops and canola, and herbicide carryover in the Peace region. In the past five years he has focused on developing systems for controlling weeds involving crop rotation, judicious tillage, fertilizers and herbicides. Two of the awards, sponsored by Dow Elanco, are given each year to western and eastern Canadian recipients. Selection is by the Expert Committee on weeds. For more information, contact Darwent in Beaverlodge at 354-2212.

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January 13, 1992

NISA feed co-efficients set

Cattle producers now have the long awaited figures they need to determine the value of feed they produced and fed livestock for the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA).

The purpose of these figures known as feed co-efficients, is to estimate the value of farm-fed grain including grain, oilseeds, speciality crops, complete feeds, protein supplements and cereal forages for NISA purposes.

"Farm fed grain declaration—cattle and calves" forms will be mailed directly to all producers who have a National Tripartite Stabilization Program (NTSP) account. Beef producers who don't participate in NTSP can get the form by calling the toll-free NISA hotline at 1-800-665-NISA.

"The form is optional," notes Merle Good of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds. "Producers who don't use it will automatically be assigned a feed co-efficient of five per cent. So, if you've already filled out your NISA application form, that five per cent will automatically be calculated by the NISA administration.

"But, higher feed equivalent co-efficient values, of up to 50 per cent, can be attained by using the form. So, producers who would benefit from calculating their own co-efficient should fill out the new form.

"By filling out the form, producers calculate their own individual co-efficient based on their combination of purchased and raised feeders, cows, bulls, breeding stock, veal, calves, and purebred cattle." He adds producers don't have to re-submit their entire NISA application form, only fill in the new form.

The form has four parts. The first section identifies the individual. The second records the number of head and sales amount of nine categories of cattle.

"Once categorized, feed co-efficients ranging from five per cent to 50 per cent are assigned by the form. For example, calf sales are assigned a five per cent factor, while sales of purchased feeders sold for slaughter are calculated at 50 per cent," says Good.

While the process looks complicated, he adds, it's necessary to determine the value of grain fed to different classes of cattle and whether the cattle were raised or purchased. For example, a producer buys cattle at $600 per head and sells them at a net $400 profit. The feed co-efficient for a purchased steer is 50 per cent. By multiplying the net sales and the co-efficient, the value of grain fed—for NISA purposes—is $200. If the producer raises the cattle and sells them at $1,000, the value of grain fed is also $200 ($1,000 times a set 20 per cent co-efficient).

"If the value of the feed equivalent co-efficient was set at 20 per cent for a purchased steer, the value of grain fed would have only been $80. This would have distorted the value of grain fed to the same type of steer. Thus, the reason for the individualized co-efficients," says Good.

Part three of the form is used to calculate the value of grain fed to custom fed cattle. It has sections dealing with custom invoices itemized by feed or charged on cost per pound of gain. The form also reconciles custom feeding charges with

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other custom work recorded on a producer's farm income and expense statement for income tax purposes. Part four of the form is a certificate of accuracy and consent to request records detailing sales reported in the application form.

Good notes producers can also change their chosen year of application, or their NISA base year, by resubmitting Schedule G for a different prior year. "When the new Schedule G is received, the NISA administration will recalculate your entitlement," he says. "This may change your 1990 entitlement and you could either receive a cheque for the additional amount, or have the additional amount left in your account."

Before the end of 1991, the deadline for NISA applications was extended to February 12. "The new February 12, 1992 deadline allows livestock producers, in particular, more time to calculate the value of any farm-fed grain for NISA purposes," says Good. The previous application deadline for the 1990 NISA year was December 31, 1991.

Contact: Merle Good
556-4237

Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame inducts four new members

The Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame has become a family affair for one of its newest inductees.

Harold Taylor of Chauvin joined his wife Georgina, a 1988 inductee, in the provincial 4-H Hall of Fame last weekend. Taylor and three other long time 4-H supporters were honored at a ceremony during the 50th annual 4-H leaders' conference.

The other inductees were: Bob Boulton of Lousana, Geoff Hardy of Pincher Creek and Elaine Lyster of Vilna. Their induction brings the hall of fame membership to 35.

Taylor's association with 4-H stretches back to 1941 when he was a founding member of the Chauvin 4-H Beef Club. He graduated to be its leader in 1949, a position he continued until 1966. Through the years, he has also served as leader to four other clubs including light horse and multi clubs.

"His nominators pointed out the many roles Harold has filled conscientiously as parent, leader, judge, teacher and chaperon," says Ted Youck, head of Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

An active volunteer at local, district, regional and provincial levels, Taylor is known as a willing teacher at workshops and clinics, and says no group is too small, if there are members willing to learn.

In addition to his 4-H involvement, Taylor has many community interests including the local rural electrification association, grazing association, Unifarm, agricultural society and provincial and national Charolais associations. As well, he has a connection to tourism, as a member of the Battle River Tourist Association and Alberta Country Vacation Association. The family's Poplar Bluff Stock Farm Guest Ranch includes a string of horses for trail rides.

Like Taylor, Bob Boulton's association with 4-H goes back to a charter membership with local 4-H clubs, the Elnora 4-H Dairy Club (1945) and Delburne Beef Club (1946). Currently he is in his 25th year of 4-H leadership, including 17 years as the Delburne 4-H Beef Club leader.

Boulton has also served on district, regional, provincial and Canadian 4-H councils. A supporter of the 4-H alumni program, he also spent the past nine years as a director of the Alberta 4-H Foundation. During those years he was chairman of the building committee, a time when all the major buildings at the Alberta 4-H Centre at Battle Lake were constructed.

A well respected member of his community and a dedicated family man, Boulton can also now boast of seven grandchildren who are 4-H members.

Geoff Hardy's 4-H involvement also now extends to his grandchildren. His nominators wrote: "It is heart warming to see three generations together at functions like achievement days, sales, workshops, tours and public speaking events".

Hardy was initially involved in 4-H as assistant leader with the Foothills Beef Club more than 40 years ago. In the early 1960s he promoted the formation of a Multi Sheep Club and in 1966 helped organize the Pincher Creek 4-H Light Horse Club. Among his other firsts were organizing the first ever South West Summer Camp in 1961, and he was an original member of the southern 4-H region's Advisory Council for 4-H Programming.

His community involvement outside of 4-H was also broad, including senior steward of the Canadian Horse Show Association, an active Pincher Creek Agricultural Society member, organizer of the Marr District light horse drill team, school trustee, director of equestrian program for the first southern Alberta Summer Games, boy scout leader and advisory member to the Olds College horse husbandry program.

Already previously recognized for his community involvement, Hardy received the Alberta Achievement Award in 1979 and was the first choice for the Pincher Creek District 4-H Council's initial Friends of 4-H Award in 1988.

Along with her 23 years of service at club, district, regional and provincial levels, Elaine Lyster has been responsible for two innovations in the Alberta 4-H movement.

Lyster, who has been sewing club leader in the Vilna area for the last 18 years, created and implemented a machine/frame knitting project for 4-H members. Her Vilna Sew'N Go Club piloted the program. Since that time, 25 other clubs have begun machine knitting, and Lyster still co-ordinates use of eight knitting machines donated and purchased for the project.

Lyster also served as recording secretary on the Alberta 4-H Council and was the first volunteer leader to work on the provincial 4-H promotion committee. She was instrumental in selecting Cleaver as the current 4-H mascot.

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Besides 4-H, Lyster is an active volunteer with other community groups. Since being diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) a few years ago, she has added canvassing for MS and a MS support group to her activities.

Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan officially inducted the four new members into the Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame.

Contact: Mahlon Weir
427-2541

"Transportation talks" meetings scheduled across province

Alberta producers can talk about the future of Canada's grain transportation system at any one of a number of "Transportation Talks" workshop meetings held throughout the province from now through early February.

The first of the Alberta meetings will be held today (January 13) and they will continue through February 13 in 33 communities across the province. (A list of the scheduled meetings follows.)

Alberta Agriculture is encouraging farmers to attend the meetings scheduled for their area says Gordon Herrington, a member of the department's planning secretariat. "We also are encouraging farmers to fully participant in the wide-ranging discussions," he adds.

Transportation Talks will be held across Canada. Independent facilitators will organize and conduct the meetings. Producers will have the opportunity both to ask questions and express their opinions.

Among the issues on the table are the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA) method of payment, efficiency of the transportation system, minimum compensatory rates (MCRs) for canola products, the impact policy changes could have on rural communities and pooling of seaway costs.

Producers who want more information on the consultation process, or about the issues under discussion, can call one of two toll-free lines. Meeting locations and a newspaper style tabloid brochure on the issues are available by calling the federal government's toll-free line at 1-800-665-2266. Alberta producers can also call a provincial line at 1-800-661-8524.

Contact: Gordon Herrington
427-2417

Transportation Talks Meetings Schedule

Location	Date	Time	Meeting Hall
Bonnyville	January 30 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Agriplex "North Room"
Brooks	January 17 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Royal Canadian Legion
Camrose	January 6 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Camrose Regional Exhibition "Gold Room"
Castor	January 14 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Castor Community Hall
Devon	February 12 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Royal Canadian Legion
Eckville	February 4 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Eckville Community Centre
Evansburg	January 31 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Royal Canadian Legion Hall
Fairview	January 15 (Wednesday)	9:00 a.m.	Fairview Legion Hall
Falher	January 14 (Tuesday)	1:00 p.m.	Gui'Donnally Sportex Hall
Foremost	February 11 (Tuesday)	6:30 p.m.	Foremost Community Hall
Fort Vermilion	February 11 (Tuesday)	12:30 p.m.	Rec-Plex
Grande Prairie	January 13 (Monday)	6:30 p.m.	Saskatoon Lake Agriculture Society
Hanna	January 13 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Royal Canadian Legion Hall
High River	February 13 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Highwood Memorial Centre
Lacombe	February 5 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Lacombe Memorial Centre
Lethbridge	February 12 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Sven Ericksen's Family Restaurant "Scarlet Room"
Medicine Hat	January 16 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Stampede Grounds "Grandstand Banquet Room"
Morinville	February 5 (Wednesday)	9:00 a.m.	St. John Baptist Parish Hall
Olds	February 3 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Olds College Alumni Centre
Oyen	January 15 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Royal Canadian Legion
Smoky Lake	January 29 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Smoky Lake Complex

Spruce View	February 4 (Tuesday)	6:30 p.m.	Spruce View Community Centre
St. Paul	January 28 (Tuesday)	6:30 p.m.	St. Paul Senior Citizens Club
Strathmore	February 7 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Strathmore Community Centre
Summerdale	February 7 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Summerdale Community Centre
Taber	February 11 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Taber Community Centre
Three Hills	February 6 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Three Hills Memorial Community Centre
Vegreville	January 27 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Elks Hall
Vermilion	January 28 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Vermilion Elks Hall
Vulcan	February 10 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Cultural Recreation Centre
Wainwright	February 4 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Communiplex "Hall 1"
Wetaskiwin	February 3 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Loyal Order of Moose
Westlock	February 6 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Westlock & District Community Hall

1991 temperatures warmer, precipitation near normal

Alberta's average annual temperature was warmer than normal and total precipitation was very near normal says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

The average annual temperature in 1991, based on data recorded at 31 climate stations across the province, was 1.3°C warmer than the average for the period 1951 through 1980 says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

The climate stations averaged 429.3 millimetres (mm) of precipitation. This total was only 6.8 mm below the 1951 to 1980 average of 436.1 mm.

"For Alberta, 1991 was as close to an 'average' precipitation year as you can get," says Dzikowski. "But that just goes to show that averages are made up of extremes."

Many parts of the province had conditions very different from what the provincial averages portray he adds. "For example, the annual total precipitation at Lac La Biche was 236.1 mm, 50 per cent of its long term average, while Red Deer received more than twice that amount. The 600 mm there was 129 percent of Red Deer's 1951 to 1980 normal amount."

Precipitation averaged for the province was within 25 per cent of the long term average for five months in 1991. January through March were below normal. September and December were notably dry, with precipitation respectively 68 and 65 per cent below the long term monthly average. June was the wettest month in 1991, with an average of 106.7 mm of precipitation, 45 per cent above normal. October was also wetter than normal at about 43 per cent above its monthly normal.

On the temperature side, the year both began and ended with temperatures above the normal. A mild January was followed by a very warm February with temperatures 7.9°C above the normal. The only two cool months were October and November. October recorded average temperatures four degrees below normal, and a cool November followed. Temperatures rebounded in December to an average four degrees above the normal.

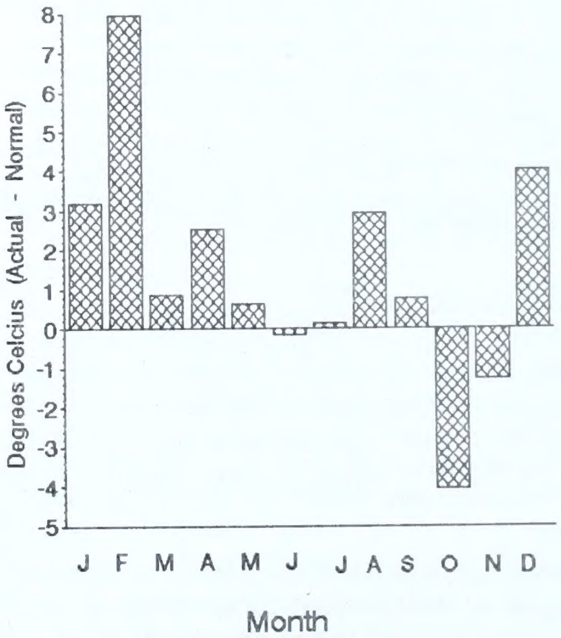
"Although the provincial averages present a simple overall picture of what happened, a lot of detail that had serious consequences is missing. An example of this is the wet months of May and June, 34 and 45 per cent above the normal. The province-wide wet weather helped provide good seed germination and adequate moisture for crop growth.

"Unfortunately, the below normal precipitation in July and August was the last thing farmers in northeastern Alberta wanted. Particularly dry conditions there diminished crop yields and reduced range and pasture productivity," he says.

Cont'd on page 5

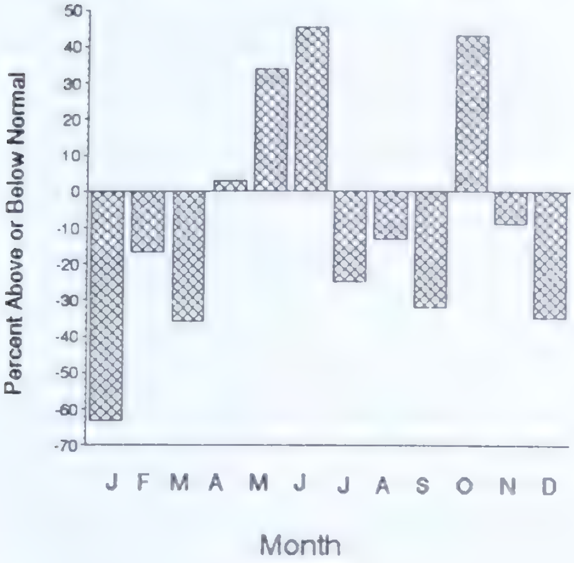
ALBERTA 1991 TEMPERATURE DEPARTURES

(Average for 31 climate stations) *



ALBERTA 1991 PRECIPITATION DEPARTURES

(Average for 31 climate stations)



* Based on preliminary data from Environment Canada

Dzikowski also notes December precipitation was below normal while temperatures were above normal. Precipitation averaged for the province during the last month of 1991 was 14.8 mm, about 35 per cent below the long term average. Temperatures were four degrees above normal. Fort Chipewyan recorded the coldest average monthly temperature in December at -19.8°C, about 0.8°C above the long term average. Pincher Creek recorded a warm 0.1°C average, the warmest average in the month and about 5.6 degrees above its normal.

For more information about 1991's weather, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Expanded livestock security plan announced

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley has announced an improved livestock security plan that will provide better financial protection to cattle and horse sellers.

Developed in conjunction with various sectors of the agriculture industry, the plan came into effect on January 1, 1992. New regulations were passed in December 1991 requiring a levy of 10 cents be remitted to the Patrons' Assurance Fund on all cattle and horses sold to licensed dealers in Canada.

In the event a licensed dealer defaults on payments to sellers, the Patrons' Assurance Fund will compensate the seller for 80 per cent of the transaction's value. The previous compensation limit was $100,000 and the new plan provides unlimited coverage.

The plan gives financial protection to producers as well as Alberta's licensed livestock dealers on all elgibile sales. The mandatory refundable levy will be charged at the time of brand inspection, automatically bringing all sellers under the plan's full protection.

Anyone wishing to opt out of the livestock security plan must notify Alberta Agriculture's regulatory services branch in writing within 30 days of the start of the program, or within 30 days of their first sale to a licensed dealer. Their levies will be refunded at the end of the calendar year.

"The expanded plan will give sellers considerably more protection than was previously available," says Isley. "Not only is the plan expanded to cover sales to licensed dealers anywhere in Canada, but it gives better protection to dealers who themselves sell to other licensed dealers. The levy permits the goverment to offer this improved coverage, while providing sellers with the option not to participate, if they so desire."

Contact: Brad Klak Bill Herbert
427-2137 427-5098

Human resource expertise valuable part of MAP'92

Management issues have had a continuing emphasis at Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conferences, but sessions on human resources have been a more than worthwhile inclusion on the conference agenda.

"Many, many of the hundreds of MAP participants have said they valued the sessions we've had on farm labour, communication, relationships and building better personal and personnel skills," says MAP'92 conference chair Doug Barlund of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

One past participant says these types of sessions draw him to the MAP conferences. "I've really benefitted from the human resource sessions. I believe I've been able to motivate people to perform better personally and in the business. Technical information is available elsewhere, but I come here to learn all I can about human resources," says Fred Whitney, a producer from Boyle, Alberta.

Four separate sessions will look at human resource topics at this year's 15th anniversary edition of MAP. Gordon Colledge, a popular speaker from MAP'91, returns to delve into another area in 1992. This year Colledge will discuss strengthening family relationships. Toronto consultant Gerry Roberts will look at conquering life's obstacles and building self esteem in his sessions. And tapping Alberta Agriculture's expertise, Susan Meyer, a district home economist in Grande Prairie, will present "sowing seeds of laughter in marriage".

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MAP'92 will return to the Lodge at Kananaskis providing a management retreat setting for farm couples. Farm couples are encouraged to attend and registration costs reflect this, as a couple's registration fee of $200 (plus GST) is only $50 more than that for a single registration.

Brochures and registration forms are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. As well, contact Barlund or Trish Pannell at 556-4240 in Olds for more information.

Contact: Doug Barlund
556-4245

Getting more bang from your bucks

(Seventh, and final, in a series)

Planning for crop production in 1992 is more important than ever before says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Budgeting for crop production is very important," says Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "Cash invested or spent to grow crops in 1992 must return at least one dollar within the following year, so cash operating capital will be available to seed crops in 1993.

"If it doesn't work out that way, farm operators will have less cash for operating expenses in 1993 than they had for operation expenses in 1992, unless they are able to borrow or get money elsewhere."

For example, a farmer with 1,000 cultivated acres expects cash expenses of $50 per acre in 1992. The farmer will want to plan to get back more than $50,000 before planting the 1993 crop. About $20,000 will probably be spent on machinery operating and maintenance costs and other costs that can't be changed notes Edwards.

The other $30,000 can be spent for crop inputs such as seed, fertilizer and other chemicals—this is where the farmer is able to make a choice of resource to get the best return. "It's to the producer's advantage to look for and find places where a dollar spent will return more than a dollar within the year," he says.

To find where the best returns can be expected in an operation, Edwards suggests producers learn the concept of equal marginal returns and how to apply the principle to their own expected expenses and revenues. That concept is included in a comprehensive farm management course.

Farmers interested in participating should register as soon as possible with an Alberta Agriculture district office for Gear Up Advantage.

As well, the farm business management branch has two publications available as a planning package by writing Edwards at: Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0 or by calling 556-4248.

Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

Agri-News briefs

Deadline for fertilizer program approaching

Alberta Agriculture reminds producers that the application deadline for the Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan is January 31, 1992. Fertilizer purchased up to July 31, 1991, is eligible for a rebate. The fertilizer must be completely paid for at the time of application. The Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan was set up in 1985 to help farmers reduce their crop production costs. The program has provided more than $125 million to over 43,000 producers during its seven year tenure. The program's conclusion coincides with new commitments to long-term safety net programs including the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) and the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA). Producers wishing to determine the eligibility of their fertilizer purchases should contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office. Those intending to submit an application should try to do so well before the deadline to ensure prompt processing of their claim. For more information, contact Lloyd Andruchow, with Alberta Agriculture's central program support in Edmonton, at 422-5672.

NISA application deadline extended to February 12

Farmers have an extra six weeks to apply for the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA). The program application deadline was extended from December 31, 1991 to February 12, 1992. The federal and provincial agriculture ministers agreed to the extension based on recommendations made by the national NISA committee. A NISA application form and guide were mailed to producers who reported a farm income in 1989. Producers who didn't receive a package, and producers with other questions can call the NISA toll-free line at 1-800-665-NISA.

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Spruce Meadows in spotlight at International Livestock Congress

A session on promotion and marketing of the horse industry at an International Livestock Congress in Texas will feature Spruce Meadows. During the session, equine associations and national breed representatives will be joined by Ian Allison of Spruce Meadows to share futuristic ideas for expanding the horse market. Allison, director of corporate communications at Spruce Meadows, will discuss creating industry awareness says Bob Coleman of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch. Coleman is a member of the organizing committee of the Congress and will also chair a session on the horse industry competing for recreational dollars. The congress will be held February 17 and 18 during the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. The issue based conference was developed for industry leaders and decision makers across the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Five different congress session themes are scheduled, including: policy and profit; North American free trade; promotion and marketing; marketing strategies for racing stock; and, the effects of tradition and policy and the future of the horse industry. The International Livestock Congress is a joint effort of Texas A&M University and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. For more information, contact Coleman in Edmonton at (403)427-6361, Pat Lee for pre-registration information at (409)845-3808, or Pete Gibbs, horse program chair, at (409)845-1562.

WBGA convention Feb.19-21

The Western Barley Growers Association (WGBA) is holding its 15th annual convention and trade fair at the Kananaskis Lodge February 19 through 21. Among the topics on the convention agenda are: economic development issues, transportation competitiveness, biotechnical development and research, barley research, stress management and wellness, adding value to Canadian Grain and malting. Pre-registering before February 7 makes registrants eligible for a trip for two to Las Vegas. For more information, contact Kathy Cooper in Calgary at 291-3630.

Alberta dairymen meet Feb. 3-5

The Alberta Dairymen's Association (ADA) is holding its 84th provincial convention and 71st annual meeting in Edmonton February 3 through 5. Addressing the convention theme of "future realities" will be futurist Frank Ogden discussing the future inside and outside the milk bottle. Among the convention agenda items are a panel on packaging and waste management in the dairy industry, and producer and processor sessions will look at financial planning and dairy promotion. For registration and other information, contact the ADA in Edmonton at 455-5164, or FAX 453-2669.

Ag ministers announce findings of decentralization study

Alberta's agriculture ministers announced an internal study concluded increased decentralization wouldn't, at this time, improve the cost-effectiveness of program and service delivery. Ernie Isley made the announcement to Alberta Agriculture staff in Edmonton on December 20 as part of an annual Christmas message. "Since news of the study was leaked, we have maintained that decentralization would only occur if it was found that services and programs could be delivered as efficiently and cost-effectively from the decentralized location. In view of the study's findings, I will not proceed any further with this initiative," says Isley. Associate Minister Shirley McClellan adds the department will continue to make provision of frontline services from rural locations a priority. "Efficient, fast service to farmers has always been our objective. Alberta Agriculture has a strong presence in 65 communities outside Edmonton and Calgary, with over two-thirds of the department's employees working out of these communities." For more information contact Bard Klak, executive assistant to the minister, at 427-2137, or Maureen Osadchuk, executive assistant to the associate minister, at 422-9156.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

January 20, 1992

Details of northeastern Alberta water assistance programs announced

Applications are now available for the Emergency Farm Water Supply Assistance Program and the Supplemental Rural Water Development Program.

The application deadline for both programs is March 31, 1992 notes John Chang of Alberta Agriculture's engineering services branch. Only bona fide farmers and ranchers whose projects are within the designated program area qualify for these programs he adds.

The designated program area is: County of Thorhild (7), County of Beaver (9), County of Athabasca (12), County of Smoky Lake (13), County of St. Paul (19), County of Two Hills (21), County of Vermilion River (24), County of Minburn (27), County of Lamont (30), Municipal District of Wainwright (61), Municipal District of Bonnyville (87), Municipal District of Westlock (92) and Improvement District 18 South.

The Emergency Farm Water Supply Assistance Program will reimburse farmers for up to 50 per cent of the costs incurred to provide emergency water supplies. Eligible projects include trenching from sloughs or shallow lakes and digging small watering holes. The program will pay a maximum of $500 per project, and fund up to three projects per farm.

Any grant provided by the Emergency Farm Water Supply Assistance Program will reduce the applicant's maximum grant under the Water Hauling Assistance Program by a corresponding amount. Projects must have been completed during the period January 1, 1991, to December 31, 1991.

The Supplemental Rural Water Development Program will match assistance offered by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) for projects intended to assure longer-term water supplies, such as the construction of wells, dugouts and stock watering dams.

The PFRA will fund up to one-third of eligible project costs or specified unit cost allowances (whichever is less), up to a maximum of $1,650 per project.

Provincially-funded projects must be completed between January 1, 1991, and December 31, 1992. Legally-associated groups of five or more farmers are also eligible for funding under this program.

"Farmers are reminded that they must obtain approval from PFRA before starting their projects," notes Chang. Only projects that meet PFRA standards and that have been granted prior approval will receive provincial funding.

Both programs are part of a $115 million package of initiatives announced November 14, 1991, by Premier Don Getty, Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Minister Shirley McClellan, to address the farm income situation and northeastern drought.

For more information on how to apply, or for provincial water assistance program application forms, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office. PFRA application forms are available from PFRA offices in Westlock, Vegreville and Hanna.

Contact:	*Darcy Fitzgerald*	*Hank Larson*
	427-2181	*PFRA, Hanna*
		854-4448

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

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Paul Gervais
556-4250

Ted O'Brien
PFRA, Regina
(306)780-6000

Livestock deferral plan expanded in northeastern Alberta

Livestock producers in seven more northeastern Alberta municipalities will be eligible for tax deferrals from a federal government program.

The drought-induced sales of breeding livestock tax deferral for 1991 will now also include the counties of Lamont, Vermilion River, Minburn, Thorhild and Beaver and the municipal districts of Wainwright and Westlock.

In early November Bill McKnight, the federal agriculture minister, announced the program would be extended to 10 municipalities in eastern Alberta. The Income Tax Act requires the federal minister designate an area or areas for the deferral program.

Alberta's Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley lobbied his federal counterpart to include the other areas affected by drought conditions during 1991. "I'm pleased that there has been positive outcome from our communication and discussion with Minister McKnight," says Isley. "Livestock producers in these seven other municipalities also lost forage and range productivity from the lack of precipitation through the summer, and some were forced to sell parts of their herds. Through this tax deferral they aren't penalized by having to make the sale, rather they now have a better ability to restock their herd."

The Drought Induced Sales of Breeding Animals program was originally announced in 1988. It allows designated producers to defer 30 per cent of sale income, if they reduce their breeding herd by at least 15 per cent and less than 30 per cent. They are allowed a 90 per cent deferral if they are forced to sell 30 or more per cent of their breeding herd. Purchase of new stock must be subtracted from total sales.

"The program is a management tool," says Paul Gervais, a farm economist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds. "Eligible producers exclude a portion of their sale income for one year. The untaxed proceeds can then be used the following year to replenish their breeding herd."

As well, producers who took advantage of the tax deferral in 1990 and again resided in an eligible area in 1991, may defer their 1990 proceeds for another year.

Producers must request this deferral when they file their 1991 income tax return. District taxation offices can answer eligibility questions.

Municipalities in the original announcement were: the counties of Two Hills, St. Paul, Smoky Lake and Athabasca; the municipal districts of Bonnyville and Acadia; Improvement District 18 (south); and, special areas 2, 3 and 4.

Breeding animals are defined in the Income Tax Act as bovine cattle, bison, goats and sheep over 12 months of age. Horses older than 12 months kept for breeding in the commercial production of pregnant mare's urine also qualify.

Prevent coyote predation at calving time

As the main calving season approaches, farmers should assess their management practices and take steps to discourage coyotes near their cattle says an Alberta Agriculture regional problem wildlife supervisor.

"Coyotes are opportunistic predators," says Bob Acorn. "They have an inborn ability to recognize and quickly take advantage of distressed or defenceless animals such as newborn calves, cows in difficult labor and sick or injured livestock. This means farmers should protect their livestock with preventative measures before and during calving."

Cows due to calve should be in well fenced areas and be closely supervised he says. First-term heifers require special attention because they are most likely to have birthing problems. Calving areas should have proper bedding and protection from wind and other weather. A lighted calving area also helps discourage coyotes and makes herd surveillance easier. Sick or injured calves and cows should be placed in a secure, protected area as they are more susceptible to predation than healthy animals. These precautionary measures should also be taken with near-term ewes and lambs.

"Coyotes rarely attack and kill large, healthy cattle. Of all the confirmed coyote cattle kills in 1990, 96 per cent were calves less than five months old. The majority of these were less than one week old. Only one per cent of the confirmed coyote kills were of cattle older than two years," he says.

A coyote's scavenging instinct also puts an emphasis on proper disposal of agricultural carrion adds Acorn. "Dead animals are the main component of a coyote's winter diet. Where they can scavenge carrion is where you'll find coyotes. The presence of carrion on your farm will attract coyotes to the vicinity of your livestock, and increases the chances of predation. Improper disposal by one landholder can create coyote problems for neighbours."

Farmers should quickly and properly dispose of all dead livestock, stillborns, afterbirth and other animals remains. The Livestock Diseases Act requires dead animals be disposed of within 48 hours he notes.

Acorn says the best approach for carcass disposal is through rendering plants. Rendering companies will pick up dead animals from farms within their business area. Dead livestock can also be hauled to a municipal disposal site that allows

Cont'd on page 3

carcass disposal. Small carcass remains and carrion can be burned or placed in a covered disposal pit and limed.

Farmers concerned about nuisance coyotes can use two measures to remove them from their property. Landholders, and residents with permission of the landowner, can shoot coyotes on private property throughout the year. "Just the act of shooting helps to frighten coyotes away," he says.

As well, recent changes to the Wildlife Act now permit holders of a resident trapping license to use neck snares to capture coyotes during the fur season.

Signs of coyote predation include attacks and feeding on the flanks of small calves and considerable evidence of bleeding. If predation occurs, farmers should immediately contact their municipal agricultural fieldman for an investigation and assistance.

"Promptly cover the carcass at the kill site with a tarp to prevent the coyotes from feeding on the dead animal, and to protect all the evidence until a government investigator arrives," advises Acorn. "An examination of the carcass and death site by an inspector will confirm the death was from coyote predation, and not just coyotes scavenging on an already dead animal. This is necessary before compensation or other assistance is provided."

Contact: Bob Acorn
674-8301

Weak economy will keep downward pressure on beef prices

Lingering problems on the supply side plus serious problems on the demand side have kept constant pressure on cattle prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"A number of factors are contributing to the weakness in the beef market, from a backlog of heavy cattle to reduced demand. The most important factor affecting beef demand is personal disposable income. This is directly related to the state of the general economy," says Ron Gietz.

"If the North American economy remains in the doldrums in 1992, demand for beef will continue to falter, resulting in downward pressure on cattle prices," he adds.

Gietz also says the $80 to $90/cwt price range of the past five years is gone. "Once again, $70 to $80 will likely become the typical annual trading range for fed cattle in Alberta. When the market is particularly strong—and, that's not likely in 1992—prices may rise above $80. When markets are under pressure, prices will likely dip below $70."

That trend is evident in 1991's prices. During the first week of 1991, Alberta slaughter steer prices averaged $86.92/cwt. By the final week of 1991, the average was $69.96. The weighted average annual steer price for Alberta Direct Sales was $78.41 in 1991, compared to the record high of $84.33 in 1990. The last time Canfax steer prices averaged below $80 for a year was in 1986, when the steer price averaged out at $75.58.

While 1992 began with higher cattle prices in both local and U.S. markets, Gietz says the extremely weak beef market in December doesn't leave room for a large rally this winter. Gietz is predicting an average slaughter steer price of $73/cwt through January and $75 in February.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Dry edible bean tripartite payment announced

Alberta's dry edible bean producers will be receiving approximately $2.9 million in final payments from the National Tripartite Stabilization Program this month.

The National Bean Committee approved a final payment of $104.07 per tonne on dry edible colored beans sold in the 1990 crop year. All varieties of colored beans grown in Alberta—Great Northern, Mexican, pinto and pink—are eligible for payments. Alberta growers sold 18,280 tonnes of colored beans during the 1990 crop year.

"Producers should receive the payment sometime during January," says Lloyd Andruchow of Alberta Agriculture's central program support branch. This second payment will complete the full amount due to bean producers.

The difference between the 1990 support price of $548.84 per tonne and the market price of $391.21, triggered the total payment of $157.63 per tonne. Adjusted for an interim payment of $53.56 per tonne, the final payment of $4.72 per hundredweight, or $147.07 per tonne, will be made to the 209 bean growers enrolled in the program. They account for 99.5 per cent of Alberta's dry edible bean production.

A National Tripartite Stabilization Program was developed in 1987 to stabilize returns to bean producers. Three specific bean categories are included: white pea beans, kidney and cranberry beans, and other colored beans. Producers and the provincial and federal governments contribute equally to the fund through annual premiums.

Contact: Lloyd Andruchow
422-5672

McClellan invites 4-H scholarship applications

Alberta's associate agriculture minister is inviting former and current 4-H members attending post-secondary institutions this fall to apply for a 1992 4-H scholarship.

"In past years, the numerous scholarships available to these young Albertans have provided assistance and rewarded

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excellence," says Shirley McClellan. "Once again this year, I am pleased to invite—and encourage—4-H members and alumni to apply for a wide range of scholarships available to assist them in attaining their educational goals."

A total of 85 scholarships worth over $55,000 can be awarded for the 1992-93 academic year. Individual scholarships range in value from $100 to $1,000. Scholarship awards are based on a number of criteria including 4-H and community involvement, and academic standing.

Application forms are now available from: all Alberta rural high schools and post-secondary institutions; regional 4-H offices; Alberta Agriculture district home economists; or, by writing to 4-H Scholarships, 200, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

The application deadline for most 4-H scholarships is July 15. Those with earlier deadlines are noted on the general application form.

4-Hers, as well as non 4-H members, taking agriculture, agricultural engineering, home economics or veterinary science are also invited to apply for the Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother Scholarship. Three of these scholarships worth $1,500 each will be awarded in 1992. Application forms for these scholarships are available only at 4-H regional offices, or by writing the Alberta Agriculture 4-H branch in Edmonton.

Contact: *Maureen Osadchuk* *Arron Madson*
Executive assistant *427-2541*
to the associate minister
422-9156

Dairy seminar looks to next decade

The Western Canadian Dairy Seminar will celebrate its 10th anniversary by looking to the next decade and beyond.

"Participants will hear experts discuss not only production issues relevant to today and tomorrow, but also topics related to economics, environment and the consumer," says David Croy, Alberta Agriculture dairy production specialist based in Lethbridge. The program will run March 10 through 13 in Red Deer.

A dairy science professor from Ohio, an Agriculture Canada research scientist from New Brunswick and a popular Canadian nutritionist are three of the feature speakers at the 1992 seminar.

Larry Smith's duties at Ohio State University include teaching, research and extension activities. Currently Smith is chairman of the U.S. National Mastitis Council's research committee and is its representative to the International Dairy Federation Group of Mastitis Experts. He will make two presentations to the seminar related to mastitis. In one, he discusses whether mastitis is an evil of high production, and in the second, the problem and control of mastitis in heifers.

Frank Robinson, currently dairy cattle researcher with Agriculture Canada in Fredericton, has spent a number of years in the private and public sectors as a researcher and feed specialist. Both his presentations at the seminar will examine feed issues. One session is titled, "how you feed can be as important as what you feed". His second presentation will deal with matching energy and protein rates of digestion in lactating cows.

Helen Bishop MacDonald is known to Calgary Herald readers for her weekly nutrition column. A frequent lecturer at Canadian universities and a consultant to several large companies, MacDonald is also known as the nutritionist responsible for athlete menus at the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics.

"At this year's seminar she will give participants new insight about dairy products and nutrition in her discussion of milk, health and the consumer," says Croy.

Among the other topics on the seminar agenda are: disposing of farm waste in an environmentally friendly manner; costs of production in the U.S. and Canada; the first 50 days of lactation; feeding bypass protein; treating cows for parasites and coccidiosis; feeding and management strategies for dry milk cows; development in the life of a cow; and, feeding to maximize payback on quota investment.

For the second year the seminar will be held in Red Deer. The seminar had traditionally been held at a Rocky Mountain location, but was moved to central Alberta in 1992.

Croy, who is also a member of the organizing committee, notes that the early registration deadline for the seminar is February 7. "Anyone who registers before the early deadline will get a break on the registration fee, instead of $165 it will be $125," he says. There are also group and student registration rates.

Brochures about the seminar will be available at Alberta Agriculture district offices and from regional dairy specialists. Registration and other information is also available by contacting Kathy Bush at the University of Alberta's animal science department, at (403)492-2601 or FAX (403)493-9130.

Contact: *David Croy*
381-5150

Agri-News briefs

Lamb producers should look to Easter

This year should bring significant improvements in the lamb market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Slaughter lamb markets have already begun to strengthen in the U.S., with recent prices running from $3 to $7 (U.S.) per hundredweight ahead of year-ago prices says JoAnn Cmoluch Sandhu. "With U.S. slaughter volumes marginally higher than last year, but lamb production down one per cent because of light carcass weights, 1992 can be expected to bring significant improvements in lamb markets," she says. Sandhu adds Alberta producers should now be planning their production to hit the premium Easter market. Easter falls on April 20 in 1992. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Low point of hog cycle this winter

Things will get better, eventually, is probably the best way to describe the current price outlook for slaughter hogs says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The most recent hog inventory report suggests that the fall of 1991 and winter of 1992 will be the low point of this hog cycle," says Ron Gietz. Overall, 1992 slaughter hog prices are expected to average below 1991 prices. However, he adds, by late 1992 prices are likely to be slightly above their year-ago levels. "A typical cyclical contraction would then lead to gradually increasing prices in 1993, heading towards a possible market high in 1994," Gietz says. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Western Canadian food industry conference in Calgary Feb. 9-10

Growth for the '90s as a blueprint for success is the theme of this year's Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry February 9 and 10 in Calgary. Among the speakers will be Bill McKnight, the federal agriculture minister. For more information, contact John Melicher at the Rural Education Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at 451-5959.

Pea market looking up

The green pea market moved sharply higher over December, while other pea markets made modest gains says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The completion of a major sale of green peas for India has spilled over into higher cash bids as companies attempt to secure product," says Al Dooley. Yellow peas continue to find support from the feed market. He adds no further price improvement is expected in the short term. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Alberta soil science workshop Feb. 18-20

The 29th Alberta Soil Science Workshop will be held in Lethbridge February 18 through 20. Management of problem soils is the workshop theme. The plenary session will cover an inventory of problem soils, soil quality and productivity, conservation and improvement options. These themes will be explored further in other sessions. For more information contact: Gerry Becke in Lethbridge at 327-4561; Ray Dowbenko in Edmonton at 493-8737; or Len Kryzanowski in Edmonton at 427-2530.

Large U.S. potato crop keeps Alberta prices low

Reduced potato acreage and smaller yields in Alberta usually would indicate a reasonably bright price picture for the potato industry says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. However, Al Dooley says, the table potato market is relatively poor. "At least part of the price weakness is due to a record U.S. fall potato harvest in 1991," he explains. U.S. production reached 372 million hundredweight, five per cent above the previous record set in 1985. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Crop protection update workshop Feb.18-20

A wide-ranging crop protection update workshop with an emphasis on hands-on learning will be held in Edmonton February 18 through 20. The workshop is open to district agriculturists, agricultural fieldmen, applied researchers, farmers and anyone else interested in upgrading their knowledge of crop protection principles and practices. Among the agenda items are identifying key weed species, recognizing and correcting copper deficiencies, weed control in field peas, herbicide resistance, problem wildlife, herbicide injury and issues in the pesticide industry. For more information, contact Denise Maurice at Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch in Edmonton at 427-7098.

Improved international wheat prices should bring final payment

Improved international wheat prices should bring more cash at the end of the crop year to producers says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Wheat adjustment payments are justified based on increases in international prices and gradual improvements are expected to continue through the crop year. A further $10 to $15 tonne combination adjustment/final payment can be expected," says Charlie Pearson. Pearson also notes total Canadian 1991-92 wheat exports are forecast to reach a record 24 million tonnes. For more information, contact Pearson in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Transportation talks meetings schedule

Alberta producers can talk about the future of Canada's grain transportation system at any one of a number of "Transportation Talks" workshop meetings held throughout the province from now through early February. Among the issues for discussion at cross-Canada meetings are the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA) method of payment, efficiency of the transportation system, minimum compensatory rates (MCRs) for canola products, the impact policy changes could have on rural communities and pooling of seaway costs. Producers who want more information on the consultation process, or about the issues under discussion, can call one of two toll-free lines. Meeting locations and a newspaper style tabloid brochure on the issues are available by calling the federal government's toll-free line at 1-800-665-2266. Alberta producers can also call a provincial line at 1-800-661-8524.

Transportation Talks meetings schedule

Location	Date	Time	Meeting Hall
Bonnyville	January 30 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Agriplex "North Room"
Devon	February 12 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Royal Canadian Legion
Eckville	February 4 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Eckville Community Centre
Evansburg	January 31 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Royal Canadian Legion Hall
Foremost	February 11 (Tuesday)	6:30 p.m.	Foremost Community Hall
Fort Vermilion	February 11 (Tuesday)	12:30 p.m.	Rec-Plex
High River	February 13 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Highwood Memorial Centre
Lacombe	February 5 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Lacombe Memorial Centre
Lethbridge	February 12 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Sven Ericksen's Family Restaurant "Scarlet Room"
Morinville	February 5 (Wednesday)	9:00 a.m.	St. John Baptist Parish Hall
Olds	February 3 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Olds College Alumni Centre
Smoky Lake	January 29 (Wednesday)	12:30 p.m.	Smoky Lake Complex
Spruce View	February 4 (Tuesday)	6:30 p.m.	Spruce View Community Centre
St. Paul	January 28 (Tuesday)	6:30 p.m.	St. Paul Senior Citizens Club
Strathmore	February 7 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Strathmore Community Centre
Summerdale	February 7 (Friday)	9:00 a.m.	Summerdale Community Centre
Taber	February 11 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Taber Community Centre
Three Hills	February 6 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Three Hills Memorial Community Centre
Vegreville	January 27 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Elks Hall
Vermilion	January 28 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Vermilion Elks Hall
Vulcan	February 10 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Cultural Recreation Centre
Wainwright	February 4 (Tuesday)	9:00 a.m.	Communiplex "Hall 1"
Wetaskiwin	February 3 (Monday)	12:30 p.m.	Loyal Order of Moose
Westlock	February 6 (Thursday)	9:00 a.m.	Westlock & District Community Hall

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

January 27, 1992

FEB 11 1992

Analyze water before buying treatment system

Before deciding on any water treatment program, farm families should have their water analyzed says an Alberta Agriculture regional engineering technologist.

Ken Williamson says some farm families have had a salesman show them "how bad their water is" with demonstrations such as a precipitation test. "This particular test grabs attention and is also deceiving. People shouldn't be swayed with this kind of test, but should have their water analyzed."

In a precipitation test a demonstrator puts a water sample in a jar and inserts a pair of electric probes. The water bubbles and turns color. Sludge forms and settles in the bottom of the jar. When the "test" is repeated with distilled water, nothing happens.

"This sort of test doesn't necessarily mean your water isn't drinkable. It only shows that there are minerals present that allow the water to carry an electric current. This current causes the corrosion on the electrodes and the result is the sludge you see.

"Nothing happens in the distilled water because most minerals have been removed. If you put a pinch of salt in the distilled water, you'd get results similar to the original demonstration," he says.

Williamson notes the level of minerals in water may or may not pose either health or aesthetic quality concerns. Aesthetic concerns are most easily identified because they get people's attention. A high iron level, for example, could give water a rusty color. "If the water stinks or stains, it won't necessarily be a health problem, unless you are the type of person who dies from embarrassment from guests arriving at your home," he says.

Health and aesthetic concerns can usually be corrected by some sort of water treatment system. "But before you buy, you need to have a proper water analysis, so you buy the right equipment for the job and are sure you really need the treatment system," says the Red Deer based Williamson.

Lucy Beck, a health inspector with the Wetoka Health Unit, agrees that water analysis is the first step. "Your local health unit is a resource you can and should use," she adds.

All Alberta health units can provide bacteriological and chemical analysis of water samples. The health unit will provide bottles for the samples. Depending on the test and any backlog, results are available between one and up to eight weeks. Test results come back with an interpretation and an information sheet comparing results with national drinking water standards.

Among the 18 common chemical levels the analysis examines are sodium, nitrates and nitrites, fluoride and iron. The test also determines water hardness, total dissolved solids and alkalinity.

"This analysis will identify any problems and can tell you which system you may need," says Beck, whose service area covers the counties of Wetaskiwin and Ponoka. "For example, if your water is hard, you might want a softening system. If you have a high sodium level, and have someone with high blood pressure in the family, then you may need a more costly system of distillation or reverse osmosis."

Contact:	*Ken Williamson*	*Lucy Beck*
	340-5324	*352-3337*

This Week

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Dynamic challenge in combining family and farm

Farm families face not only the challenge of keeping their family strong, but combining family and business goals says an Alberta Agriculture family resource management specialist.

"This dual challenge of juggling two different social systems—family and business—offers both heartbreaking frustrations and heart warming rewards," says Jean Wilson, an Edmonton-based provincial specialist.

"A strong family and an effective business aren't out of reach. Some families seem to do it instinctively, but the successful ones have learned or worked at coping with a number of crucial issues," she says.

One divisive element is the difference between family and business goals. "Often those goals are complementary when both the farm and family are young. As the family and business grows, the pressure of making a profit may compete with family togetherness," Wilson says. "The difference in goals may be even more difficult in a two or multi-generation family and business."

To assist farm families in accomplishing both family and farm business goals, Alberta Agriculture published a series of "Profit from People Power" factsheets. The series examines specific issues such as goal setting, decision making, business meetings, time investment and communication. Family dynamics in the farm business is also a topic in the eight-part series.

In the family dynamics factsheet the four issues unique in family business are examined. These are: who has the authority, who will continue to manage the farm business, how much should family members be paid and how evaluation and development of family members is handled. As well, a worksheet helps the farm family review their attitudes, behaviors and goals.

"The worksheet allows any family to look at their particular dynamics and help them to choose to make their family happy and business successful," says Wilson.

"Family dynamics in the Farm Business" (Homedex 1834-7) is available by writing Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

More information on these subjects is also available from Alberta Agriculture district home economists, regional family resource management specialists, and Wilson, the provincial specialist in Edmonton, at 427-2412.

Contact: *Jean Wilson*
427-2412

CELEBRATING ALBERTA'S FAMILIES

Strong families share same traits

Alberta's pioneering history will always give a special place to the family farm and farm families, and while fewer Albertans live on farms today, that influence is still a strength in Alberta society.

"For many Albertans, farms and farm families will always be a touchstone, a link to our society's roots. And while fewer than 10 per cent of Albertans live on farms now, farm families are still a vital example of family strength," says Jean Wilson, an Alberta Agriculture family resource management specialist.

Just over 80 per cent of Albertans were a part of family households in 1990. Farm family statistics show some differences compared to other Alberta families. Farm families are more likely than non-farm families to have both parents present (95 per cent) and to have children living at home.

There are more single people on farms, but fewer people who are divorced, separated or single parents than in Alberta as a whole. As well, the average farm family, according to the 1986 census, was larger (3.6 people) than for the rest of the province at 3.3 people. The average number of persons per household on farms was 3.4 compared to 2.8 for the province.

Sociologists could probably produce many reasons for those statistics says Wilson. Ronald Pitzer, an American rural sociologist at the University of Minnesota, has one theory. He says farm and other entrepreneurial families "have to be more deliberate in thinking out the balance between work and family life". In being successful, those families achieve a balance in togetherness and apartness when their home and workplace are the same place.

Pitzer and other sociologists have also identified characteristics that make families strong. These include: showing appreciation of and affection to other family members; open communication; shared responsibility for family functioning; relatively democratic planning and decision making; flexibility and openness to change; shared values; spending time together; helping family members solve problems; sharing family history; and, connections with people outside the family.

Today farm families are still thriving despite the more complex demands of the current agricultural economy. "These characteristics of strong families," says Wilson, "are what will see a farm family through both personal and business crisis. With today's stresses in the agricultural economy, plus the ever-present production challenges, these qualities are what will allow some families to survive along with their farm business. These qualities too, will help the family if they must leave the farm."

Contact: *Jean Wilson*
427-2412

Pursuit of best hog in Pork Congress competition

A special "race" feature of the Alberta Pork Congress offers pork producers a lucrative showcase for producing the best hog in a set time frame.

"The annual competition of the Alberta Pork Congress really is just a display of what producers are trying to achieve all the time, raising barrows quickly to a market weight and also measuring success in how good the final meat product is," says Art Lange, of Alberta Agriculture's pork industry branch.

The competition provides some additional incentive for the farmer as the winning competition carcasses sell for much more than the average market price. Last year the top 10 carcasses averaged a selling price just over $1,600. The first place carcass in the ballroom sale went for $2,750. "That compares more than favourably with the current market price of about $75," notes Lange.

Competition rules are simple. The competition begins when pigs are weighed and tagged on farms by provincial swine technicians between March 23 and April 3. Weight restrictions do apply. Pigs must not weigh more than 35 kg (77 lbs.) if tagged between March 23 and 27, and not more than 38 kg (84 lbs.) if tagged between March 30 and April 3. Pork producers then have until June 8 to raise the pig to a market weight of 100 kg (220 lbs.). On June 10 the pigs will be butchered and the competition carcasses will be graded by Agriculture Canada inspectors.

The 10 pork carcasses that score the highest combination of points for carcass quality and growth rate will be brought to the Alberta Pork Congress banquet on June 10 to be auctioned. Competitors receive the selling price minus a 20 per cent commission charged by the congress.

The competition entry deadline is February 28. Out-of-province entrants are welcome. For entry forms and additional information, contact the Alberta Pork Congress office in Red Deer at 340-5307, or Lange in Edmonton 427-5319.

Contact: Art Lange
427-5319

Alberta Agriculture reorganizes production and marketing sector

Alberta Agriculture's production and marketing sector has been reorganized to put a sharper focus on meeting the needs of the department's clients in a more competitive world marketplace.

"The challenge of delivering market-sensitive programs that Alberta producers and agribusinesses require in today's freer world marketplace demands a better integration of how we deliver our services," says Barry Mehr, assistant deputy minister of production and marketing.

"We will continue to provide a similar level of services, but in a much more effective and responsive way, in order for Alberta's agrifood industry to take advantage of the opportunities in an increasingly globalized marketplace," says Mehr of the reorganization. "We will achieve this goal by moving some branches to new divisions, creating a better harmony of and more market focused services for Alberta agricultural producers, agricultural organizations, agribusinesses and processors."

The realignment divides the sector into four key divisions—marketing services, processing services, animal industry and plant industry. The division directors respectively will be Cliff Wulff, Dennis Glover, Terry Church and Don Macyk.

The former animal health division is absorbed primarily into the new-look animal industry division. As well, a special advisor to the assistant deputy minister has been appointed. Ken Spiller, former director of the animal industry division, will fill this position. He will work on special programs critical to the agricultural industry. All changes become effective on February 1, 1992.

Contact: Barry Mehr
427-2442

Alberta Agriculture appointments

New regional crop specialist in Peace

After five years as district agriculturist in Sangudo, Mark Olson has headed to the Peace Country to take up new duties as regional crop production specialist. Olson did a lot of plot research work on crop varieties and fertility while in Sangudo and says he is, "looking forward to specializing in cereals and oilseeds. As well, I'm excited about being in a new territory and working with field staff and farmers in the Peace." He first worked for Alberta Agriculture in the summers of 1984 and 1985, originally at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks, and then as an assistant district agriculturist in Barrhead. Raised on a mixed farm in the Carvel area west of Edmonton, he graduated from the University of Alberta with a BSc in agriculture in 1986. He is currently working on a masters of agriculture degree in extension education. Olson can be reached in Fairview at 835-2291.

Eaglesham has new district agriculturist

Doug Moisey is the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Eaglesham. Moisey was most recently at the Westlock district office for a year, and also filled the same position in Two Hills for a year. "I'm eager to be living and working in the Peace region. I look forward to the particular challenges of agriculture here and working with the area's producers," he says. As district agriculturist he will assist producers, agricultural organizations and agribusiness with a broad range of information and educational programs. Moisey's previous work experience with the department includes a stint as a Crow Benefit Offset program inspector. Moisey is a 1985 graduate of the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program. He can be reached in Eaglesham at 359-3828.

New district agriculturist in Westlock

Cathy Kehoe has joined the Alberta Agriculture district office in Westlock as its newest district agriculturist. "I am looking forward to working in the Westlock area. It seems to be a very busy and progressive region," she says. As district agriculturist she will provide information and educational programs to producers, farm organizations and agribusiness. Kehoe, who graduated from the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program in 1991, has spent the last three summers working out of the Morinville district office. The first year she worked with a group of local canola producers and for the past two years was the Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) summer technician for the Pulse Growers Commission. Originally from St. Albert, Kehoe gained farm experience at her family's grain farm in the Meanook area. She can be reached in Westlock at 349-4465.

New Red Deer based regional crop production specialist

Tom Schuler has left the Peace country to take up a new position as the north central regional crop production specialist. Schuler was formerly the Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Fort Vermilion from late 1989. He joined the department after completing a master's degree majoring in genetics and crop breeding at the University of Saskatchewan. His undergraduate degree, a BSc in agriculture (1984), was from the same institution. In his new role as an industry specialist in all aspects of crop production and marketing, he will provide assistance and information about updated and new technologies to district agriculturists, agricultural fieldmen and farmers. Born and raised in the Lethbridge area, Schuler has a strong farming background and is still involved with a dryland wheat farm near Medicine Hat. Schuler has a mixed outlook for the industry's future. "Things are bound to get better in the agriculture industry, but not necessarily before they get worse," he says. He adds he sees a need for both farm financial management that finds the lowest cost means of increasing returns per acre and research into new production techniques with lower per acre input costs. Schuler can be contacted in Red Deer at 340-5325.

Agri-News briefs

Wool prices should be stronger

Positive developments in international markets should result in stronger wool prices this year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "How much stronger will depend on quality and how much domestic demand for wool has increased," says JoAnn Cmoluch Sandhu. For two consecutive years international wool markets were undermined by more than one million tonnes of Australian production. An Australian Reserve Price Scheme had maintained artificially high prices despite weakened demand for wool by major importers. The program collapsed under a $2.8 billion dollar debt in April 1991. As a result, millions of wool-type sheep in Australia were destroyed. Further reduced Australian production because of a drought, and growing wool imports by the Pacific Rim, Western Europe and the United States are having a positive impact on wool prices. Sandhu notes quality and preparation are critical to getting the most out of the wool marketplace. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Foothills Forage Co-op meets Feb. 29

The Foothills Forage Co-op Association will hold its annual general meeting and seminar on February 29. The meeting is scheduled for Rotary House at Stampede Park in Calgary. For more information, contact Isabel McPherson in Calgary at 244-4487.

Lacombe pea update Feb. 12

An update on the latest in pea production will be held in Lacombe on February 12. The one-day seminar will look at weed control results, the timing for cutting pea silage mixtures, pulse variety and agronomy trials, a market outlook, inoculating pulses and pulse crops in soil conservation. The seminar is sponsored by zone two of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission and the Alberta Agriculture Lacombe district office. For more information call the Lacombe office at 782-3301 or 340-7161.

Calgary seed fair and hay show starts Feb. 29

The 44th annual Calgary seed fair and hay show will be held in conjunction with the Calgary bull sale February 29 through March 3. Winners in pedigreed seed, open seed, hay and silage, sheaf and junior classes will take home $7,000 in prize money. Seed and sheaf exhibits must arrive by February 12. For more information call the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede agricultural office at 261-0313.

Deadlines approach for Ag-Expo and Northlands seed shows

Two major Alberta seed shows have entry deadlines in February. Silage entries are due on February 14 and all other classes on February 21 for the North American Seed Fair at Ag-Expo'92 in Lethbridge. Ag-Expo runs from March 4 through 7. For more information, contact the Lethbridge exhibition office at 328-4491. The entry deadline for Northlands' Pedigreed Seed Show is February 28. That ninth annual show runs March 24 through 27 in Edmonton. For more information, call 471-7260.

Forage insurance video available at District Offices

All Alberta Agriculture district video libraries now have a new video profiling forage insurance. The 13 minute video, "Forage Insurance" (Agdex 838-1) discusses the reasons for and details about the Canada-Alberta Forage Insurance Program. Forage insurance is provided through the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation and protects farmers against losses to hay and pasture crops. For more information, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Soft Wheat Commission meets Feb. 26

The Alberta Soft Wheat Producers Commission will hold its annual meeting February 26 in Lethbridge. Alberta Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley is scheduled as the luncheon and guest speaker. For more information contact Andy Kovacs, executive director, in Lethbridge at 380-4189.

Coming agricultural events notice

- Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **March, April, May or later in 1992**? Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by February 20, 1992 to:

Agri-News Editor
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in Agri-News
The next list will be March 2, 1992)

AL.1.1641

Phone. (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

February 3, 1992

Farmer Pesticide Certification Program announced

The first Farmer Pesticide Certification Program courses to train Alberta producers in the proper and safe application of pesticides begins this week in the Camrose area.

Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan officially launched the Farmer Pesticide Certification Program last week.

While certification is mandatory in some provinces, farmer certification in Alberta is voluntary. The announcement of the Farmer Pesticide Certification Program brings Alberta alongside other leading provinces that currently offer training in pesticide technology and safety.

Certification will be provided through a two-day course. The course is designed to ensure the proper use of pesticides to protect the environment, farm families and pesticide applicators themselves. Participants will learn about pesticide safety, toxicology, protective clothing, sprayer operation, environmental protection, legislation and food safety.

Much of the safety information was developed through research conducted by the University of Alberta's home economics faculty with support from Alberta Agriculture's Farming for the Future program.

In the program announcement McClellan gave credit to industry, municipal government, producer and Olds College representatives who came together to provide Alberta Agriculture with valuable guidance and financial support in developing the program.

Bob Bigsby, Olds College president, says the college is pleased to have played a role in the landmark program. Funds contributed by industry sponsors have been matched by government funds through the Olds College Foundation.

McClellan notes a recent announcement by Monsanto Canada Inc. to pay half of the $40 tuition for Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) members is an example of the excellent support for the program from producer groups and industry.

"Alberta Environment has also been involved in the design of the course," says McClellan. "We are hopeful that the certificate issued to producers who successfully complete the course will be recognized as qualifying them to use all pesticides."

The Farmer Pesticide Certification Program will meet national certification standards. District agriculturists, district home economists, agricultural fieldmen and industry representatives, volunteering their time as instructors, will offer the course via Olds College in communities throughout Alberta. Producers who successfully complete the course will receive a certificate from the college.

McClellan urges Alberta farmers to take advantage of the program. "After personally reviewing the course materials, I am proud to encourage producers to talk to staff in their local agriculture office and determine when the course will be offered in their area so they may become certified pesticide users in Alberta," says McClellan.

Contact: *Maureen Osadchuk*
Executive assistant to the associate minister
422-9156
Keith Price
Crop protection branch, Alberta Agriculture
427-7098
Thom Shaw, Olds College
556-8231

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Fabric caps need to come off

While farmers are doing a better job of wearing protective clothing when mixing and spraying pesticides, many of them still wear a potentially harmful piece of clothing: a fabric cap.

"The common fabric cap looks harmless," says Bertha Eggertson, a clothing and textiles specialist with Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch. "But the simple truth is that a fabric cap can absorb pesticide spray or dust. Then it's a continual source of contamination as long as the farmer wears it, and it's really a problem because the head area has one of the highest absorption rates on your body.

"We recommend wearing a hard hat because it deflects the spray and dust away from the head area and it's easy to decontaminate," she adds.

Eggertson recently completed analyzing results from a survey of Alberta grain farmers asked about protective clothing, laundering pesticide-soiled clothing, pesticide usage and exposure of farm families to pesticides. The survey asked questions of two groups: farmers who had participated in a previous similar survey in 1984 and a new group of randomly selected farmers.

"Approximately 80 per cent of both these groups are still wearing fabric caps when they are working with pesticides," says Eggertson. "This points to one area of education and awareness we'll have to work on."

In general, the survey found more farm families are wearing protective clothing and fewer are suffering pesticide poisoning symptoms than was reported in 1984. There is also improved awareness of the possibility for cross-contamination while handling clothing before washing and during drying.

"The group that was surveyed in 1984 and again in 1991, was more careful when laundering," notes Eggertson. "More wore nitrile gloves when separating the clothing for washing, they used hotter water and more detergent and also more of them line dried the clothes."

Another encouraging sign was that fewer farmers were eating, drinking or smoking while still wearing the clothes worn while using a pesticide. "Unfortunately the number still isn't very high, only 50 per cent of the survey," says Eggertson.

Some other practices changed over the seven year period. More farmers wore disposal coveralls, impermeable aprons and respirators. There was also a significant increase in the use of neoprene or rubber boots. In the 1984 survey 84 per cent of respondents wore leather shoes and boots, in 1991 only 45 per cent said they did.

"We did expect to see that the 1984 group would take more protective measures, but the total study has shown the areas we particularly need to provide information about," says Eggertson. She adds the new Farmer Pesticide Certification Program will assist in farmer awareness and education.

Contact: Bertha Eggertson
427-2412

Zero-till research shows yield, fertility and economic advantages

With one-crop year still to go in an extensive study of zero-tillage in northeastern Alberta, research has already shown a number of advantages from the conservation practice.

For the past four years Agriculture Canada's Vegreville Experimental Farm has undertaken an extensive study of zero-tillage. With partial project funding from the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research Technology Transfer (CARTT) program, Dave McAndrew and a research team have looked at zero-till in three soil zones and examined different aspects of the conservation tillage practice.

"To date in our trials, we've found that zero-tillage can out yield other tillage treatments, use nitrogen fertilizer more effectively and be part of a crop rotation system that has economic advantages over summerfallow," says McAndrew, superintendent of the experimental farm.

"In general, during dry years our zero-tillage trials provided a yield advantage over more conventional tillage practices, and in wet years zero-till produced equivalent yields," he adds. "This combined with the additional benefits from reduced wind and water erosion makes zero-tillage a potential economic alternative for farmers."

In the main tillage study, zero-tillage (seeding into stubble) was compared with: minimum tillage, a herbicide application in the fall and one cultivation pass before spring seeding; light conventional tillage, two cultivation passes in the fall and one in the spring; and, heavy conventional tillage, four cultivations passes in the fall and one in the spring.

Since the spring of 1988, 20 site-years of data have been collected—five sites and four years of collection—using a Leduc barley crop. "In half of these site-years, zero-tillage has out yielded the other three tillage systems, and in five more site-years, there was no difference between the tillage treatments," he notes.

In adjacent study at the same sites, the research team examined fertility differences between zero-till and light conventional tillage. Both nitrogen and phosphorous were used. Since 1988 the zero-till plots with applied nitrogen have had consistently higher yields. "This means the zero-till barley was able to use the nitrogen more effectively," he says. He adds there was no obvious difference with the phosphorous fertilizer.

Researchers also looked at crop rotations and alternatives to summer fallow in a third study at one of the sites. Crop rotations—including pea plowdown, pea grain removal, oats, canola and summerfallow—were followed by two years of Leduc barley.

Cont'd on page 3

"Pea plowdown and pea grain removal did well under the zero-till conditions. The study showed there are economic alternatives to summerfallow," McAndrew says.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

Contact: *Dr. Dave McAndrew* *632-3985*
Russ Horvey *422-4385*

Weatheradio now available in Grande Prairie

Grande Prairie area farmers can now hear agricultural weather forecasts from Weatheradio Canada.

"The 24 hour per day service began transmitting late last month," says Peter Dzikowski, Alberta Agriculture weather resource specialist. "It offers farmers hourly updates and weather warnings."

Weatheradio isn't available on a regular AM/FM radio. In Grande Prairie the weather broadcasts will be transmitted at 162.400 MHz on the VHF-FM band. Transmission is by line of sight and the signal can be received within 50 to 70 km of the transmitter.

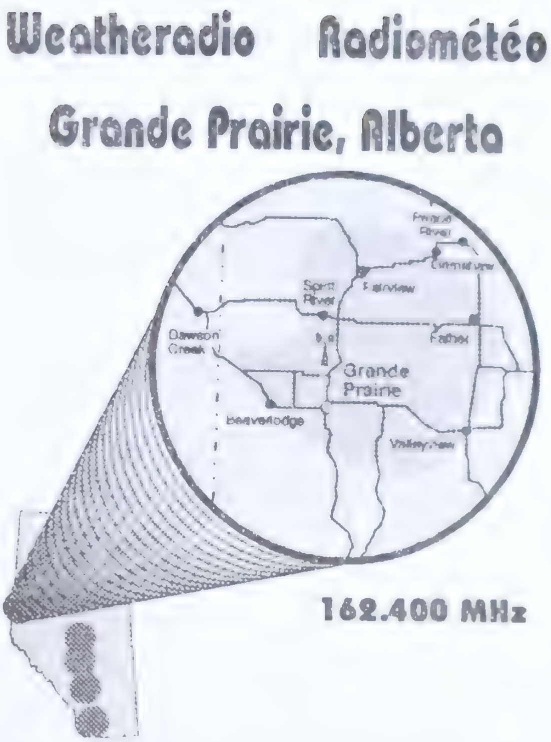
"Farmers will need a special Weatheradio receiver or a good quality multi-band radio to hear the broadcast. The receivers retail at between $60 and $100," says Dzikowski. A crystal controlled receiver, with a switch not a dial, is recommended. If the signal is weak, an external antenna may improve reception. Also recommended is a receiver with a warning alert feature and a battery back-up power source.

The Grande Prairie transmitter is the sixth in the province. Two transmitters are located in Edmonton, where the first transmitter began operating in 1980. Weatheradio expanded to Calgary in 1983, Lethbridge in 1989 and last year came to Red Deer. Weatheradio is owned and operated by Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service.

As part of a continuing Weatheradio awareness campaign, Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch held a draw for a Weatheradio receiver at the recent provincial soil conservation workshop. Winner Glen Good of Red Deer will now be able to listen to Weatheradio's up-to-date forecasts.

Alberta Agriculture and the Atmospheric Environment Service also co-operatively provide the Alberta Farm Weather Line. Seven regional lines with specialized farm forecasts operate around the province. More than 320,000 calls, a 24 per cent increase, were made to those lines during 1991.

Contact: *Peter Dzikowski*
422-5385



Take your family's financial pulse

When families think about doing something special for Valentine's Day or Family Day, they might want to take their financial pulse says an Alberta Agriculture family resource management specialist.

"Taking stock of your financial situation and putting together an emergency file of important papers is a good idea for a farm couple or family," says Jean Wilson, a provincial specialist based in Edmonton. "It's something everyone should do annually."

To take your financial pulse look at where your valuable papers and documents are and if they are up to date. This includes such things as property titles, insurance policies, income tax records, wills, loans and other agreements, stocks or bonds, birth and marriage certificates, bank and credit cards, social insurance numbers, driver's licenses and health care card. "Another thing to note is who has or where are keys for a safety deposit box," she adds.

"We recommend putting together copies of all important business, family and personal documents in one easily accessible location," says Wilson. "Most original documents should be kept in a safety deposit box or some other safe fireproof and waterproof place."

Wilson says not only do families benefit by putting together this type of file and having it handy when an emergency arises, but it's also a good opportunity to update their family and business situation. "Through the years at seminars we

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found couples who had 20-year-old wills they hadn't updated. Some young couples with children didn't have a will stating guardianship of their children. Insurance policies should be checked to ensure their coverage is adequate for both death and injury to either spouse." This kind of review should also include looking at living expenses over the past year and financial goals. "Look at not only this year's goal, but to the next three to five years. This will give you a sense of where you've come from and where you're heading," says Wilson.

Retirement planning should also be a topic of conversation adds Wilson. "It's become almost a cliche now, but it's true that it's never too early to start planning for your retirement."

Alberta Agriculture district home economists can assist farm families in taking their financial pulse. For more information about publications and seminars, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: *Jean Wilson*
427-2412

Strengthening family sessions at MAP'92

Families have a terrific opportunity during today's economic downturn to pull together says one of the feature speakers at this year's Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conference in early March.

"Circumstances in life either gift us or cripple us," says Gordon Colledge. He adds during bad economic times, "We need to look for the gift".

Colledge, family support co-ordinator at Lethbridge Community College's family studies and rural initiatives program, is a returning speaker at MAP'92 March 1 through 4 at the Kananaskis Lodge. He will talk to conference participants about strengthening family relationships.

"Nothing else in life matters except relationships," he says. "Everyone needs to remind themselves every day: 'This relationship means more than blank.'," he says.

With a slower economy and tight budgets, families have an opportunity to tune in to each other by cocooning at home, spending time doing things together that don't cost a lot of money, or taking the time to communicate with each other.

Colledge advocates using the kitchen table or even the time it takes for farm families to drive into town to really talk with each other. "Families that are happy articulate what they're feeling and tell what they're going through," he says. And while talking—and just living—his advice to all families is to give each other the same courtesy and respect a friend receives.

During his MAP'92 session, he will reinforce that parents need to take care of themselves and their relationship. "Out of that positive atmosphere they can really do things for their kids," says Colledge.

Colledge's message to couples will be echoed in the theme of another MAP'92 session. Susan Meyer, an Alberta district home economist in Grande Prairie, will talk about sowing seeds of laughter in marriage.

"The most important part of the family is the couple," says Meyer, "They are the basis of strength in the family. I'll talk about loving, growing relationships and the importance of having fun."

Registration costs encourage farm couples to attend MAP. This year a single registration is $150, and $200 (plus GST) for a couple.

The management issues conference is celebrating its 15th anniversary in 1992. Brochures and registration forms are now available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. As well, for more information interested persons can contact Doug Barlund or Trish Pannell, at the farm business management branch in Olds at 556-4240.

MAP'92 is co-sponsored by the Rural Education Development Association (REDA) and Alberta Agriculture with additional assistance from the private and public sectors.

Contact: *Doug Barlund* *Susan Meyer*
556-4245 *538-5285*

CELEBRATING
ALBERTA'S
FAMILIES

Agri-News briefs

Iron and the athlete

Peak performance in sports comes from the fuel athletes put into their bodies. One of the most important, although often ignored, ingredients in that fuel is iron. Iron deficiency is even more common among athletes than in the general population. A doctor with the Sports Medicine Council of Canada estimates one-third of athletes have that problem. Iron is an essential component of hemoglobin that carries oxygen to all body cells. Oxygen is then used to release energy from the foods we eat. "Therefore, adequate iron stores, necessary for optimal energy metabolism are key for peak performance in sport," says Dr. Marielle Ledoux. By correcting low iron levels, athletes improve their performance. In one recent study, restoring adequate iron levels in female runners increased their running endurance times significantly. Ledoux notes not all iron is created equally and close attention should be paid to the quality of iron in the diet, not just the quantity. "High quality heme iron found in meat sources is more easily utilized by the body than non-heme iron from vegetables, nuts and grains. As an added bonus, meat in the diet increases the absorption of iron from other foods." February is National Meat Month. For more information, in Alberta call Kathy Keeler in Calgary at 275-5890 or Bill Owen in Edmonton at 474-8288.

Farm family conference on Family Day

Farm families are invited to attend a conference for the whole family on Alberta's Family Day February 17 in Grande Prairie. Organized by the Alberta Agriculture district office, the conference will feature keynote speaker Gordon Colledge talking about how to communicate and have fun as a family. Other sessions will look at aspects of the farm family business as well as farm safety. Babysitting will be provided for the younger family members, but sessions will be open to all age groups. For more information, contact the Grande Prairie district office at 538-5285.

Forage Seed Council/Commission holding meetings

The Alberta Forage Seed Council is holding a series of meetings across the province beginning next week. Among the topics at the day-long meetings is forming a commission. The first meeting will be in Brooks at the Telestar Motor Inn on February 10. Peace region meetings will be in Peace River on February 11 (Travellers Motor Hotel) and Grande Prairie on February 12 (Golden Inn). Later this month, meetings will be in St. Paul (St. Paul Cultural Centre) on February 19 and Stony Plain (Alberta Agriculture building) on February 23. Production and marketing topics will also be on the agenda. For more information, contact Marvin Nakonechny secretary/manager in Edmonton at 427-5357, or Bob Gartly, president of the Alberta Forage Seed Council, in Eaglesham at 359-3952.

AGT expands role with "Battle of the Breeds"

AGT will become the exclusive sponsor of the Battle of the Breeds program during Spruce Meadows fall Masters tournament. The popular Battle of Breeds competition features teams of four horse/rider combinations representing nearly 20 Alberta horse breed associations. The eight event competition was introduced in 1990 and allows the breed associations to showcase their horses to the international audience at the Masters. AGT's sponsorship will include $30,000 in prize money. The 1992 Spruce Meadows Masters tournament will be September 9 through 13. For more information, contact Randy Fedorak, Spruce Meadows manager of special features, at 254-3200 in Calgary.

Safflower growers annual meeting March 3

The Alberta Safflower Growers Association will hold its annual meeting in Lethbridge on March 3. Among the agenda topics are: a safflower and mustard market situation and outlook; updates on sunola and the dual purpose "Stirling" safflower; and, the latest in research, seedling and emergence, soil fertility and herbicides. The new Safflower Production Handbook will be available for distribution to members. To pre-register, call 381-5127 in Lethbridge.

Regenerative farm techniques workshops this month

Three regenerative farm techniques workshops will be held in southern and central Alberta this month. The Sustainable Agriculture Association is offering the workshops in Olds on February 15, in Warner on February 19 and in Camrose on February 29. Sessions will be presented by farmers who have successfully operated their farms using a limited number of

Cont'd on page 6

inputs. Each workshop will cover general principles, soil build-up, crop rotations, and weed and pest control. Economic thresholds and marketing opportunities will also be addressed. For more information, contact Dwayne Smith in Vulcan at 485-6461, or Dennis Vriend in Edmonton at 955-2851.

Warm blood horse breeders meet March 1

The Alberta chapter of the Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association will hold its annual general meeting at Spruce Meadows on March 1. The 3 p.m. meeting is scheduled to follow an earlier stallion showcase. The meeting's agenda includes stallion testing requirements and regulations, preparing your colt for licensing and training, and a video presentation on "100 day stallion testing". The meeting and stallion showcase are open to all interested breeders and horse owners. For more information, contact Chris Gould in Mayerthorpe at 786-4337.

8th annual egg quality contest

All registered egg producers are invited to enter the Alberta Egg and Fowl Marketing Board Egg Quality contest. Each producers is allowed one entry of one flat of 30 ungraded eggs. Entries must be delivered to a designated room at the Capri Centre in Red Deer between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. on March 3. Trophies will be awarded for best overall entry, best shell quality and best Haugh units. For more information, call Jane Carlyle at 250-1197 in Calgary.

Lakeland College assist in Ukrainian Ag Development

Two representatives of Lakeland College will be working with the Edmonton-based Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre on a co-operative agricultural training project in the Ukraine. Jean Webb and Leonard Fundytus will leave for the first phase of the project in mid-February. Olds College and the University of Saskatchewan's School of Agriculture are also partners in the project. The project's focus is helping Ukraine's agricultural educators develop farm management, crop production and horticultural program cirricula for Ukrainian farmers. For more information, contact Lakeland College's international development office in Vermilion at 853-8605.

ACC doing member wildlife survey

The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) is asking its members to fill out a survey about the wildlife and wildlife habitat on their land. The survey was attached to the January 1992 edition of the "Alberta Cattleman", the organization's newsletter. Survey questions ask producers to identify types of habitat on their land, types of game species and whether their numbers are increasing or decreasing, and if they allow access to their land. Producers are reminded to fill out the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible. For more information, contact Joanne Lemke in Calgary at 275-4400.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

February 10, 1992

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Humans are designed to eat meat

Concerns about health have made people more anxious about what they eat, but going overboard on those concerns could play havoc with how your body functions.

"To reach our potential—both from the genetic material we inherited and in living—we must eat adequate supplies of all 50 known nutrients," says Aileen Whitmore, Alberta Agriculture provincial foods and nutrition specialist.

"With that number of necessary nutrients it's both logical and true that we should eat a variety of foods, that our diet be balanced and that we practice moderation. In other words, a mixed diet of both plant and animal foods."

A University of Alberta physiology professor also says humans are best served by an omnivorous diet. Dr. Chris Cheeseman, of the medicine faculty, says there is no physiological reason to indicate humans aren't designed to eat, digest and absorb proteins from animal sources.

"Humans are able to digest and absorb proteins from both plant and animal sources," he says. "But the evidence strongly suggests that animal protein is assimilated more efficiently than plant protein."

One of human physiology's more distinctive features is that our digestive tract can't cope with large amounts of fibre. While fibre is necessary, humans' short colons are better suited to a mixed diet of nutrient dense foods, including meat, and moderate amounts of fibre. (Canadians, though, could still eat more fibre than they do notes Whitmore.)

Whitmore adds that basic nutrient principles and this basic human physiology are overrun by headlines about the latest food research. The miracle of oat bran, cholesterol scares and the need for more fibre have caused some people to go overboard in either adding or deleting those foods to and from their diets.

"It doesn't pay to overreact to headlines about what is good and bad for us. We need to stick to balance and moderation. I've seen a case of a mother concerned about salt, cutting out sodium to the extent that the children developed goitre," Whitmore says.

Parents, too, have overreacted to concerns about cholesterol in animal food products. Repercussions from cutting down by too much or cutting red meats completely are now being studied. "These studies are pointing to curbed growth and development of children," notes Whitmore, "and the tragic element is that the dietary changes parents made were probably out of health concerns."

There are many well documented growth deficiencies stemming from man's departure from a mixed diet, stretching as far back as skeletal records of the first agricultural-reliant humans who were fully six inches shorter than their high meat eating ancestors. And more recently for the first time in Canada, a zinc deficiency causing depressed growth was identified by a University of Guelph professor.

Rosalind Gibson, a professor of applied human nutrition, studied some southern Ontario children. She found children with less than optimum zinc status tended to have lower intakes of meat, poultry and fish, all sources of readily available zinc. "In addition," she notes, "they had higher intakes of dietary fibre, phytate and calcium, which all inhibit the absorption of zinc."

Similarly, vitamin B12 deficiency has a negative effect on growth and development. A recent study published in the

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This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found the majority of children living in a macrobiotic vegetarian community in New England were relatively short in stature. These children had consumed little or no meat, eggs or dairy foods their entire lifetime and were deficient in or had only marginal stores of vitamin B12.

B12 is found only in foods of animal origin, so individuals who follow strict vegetarian diets that eliminate all animal food products for long periods, risk a B12 deficiency.

"You can take a B12 supplement and it will provide that nutrient, but if you don't eat meat then you don't get the benefit of all the other trace minerals such as zinc," says Whitmore.

Another important nutrient for children and adults in red meat is iron. Children need adequate iron to ensure optimum brain development and function. Lack of iron is the most common nutrient deficiency in Canada. This causes fatigue, irritability and listlessness. It's even more common among athletes than in the general population.

Whitmore notes that the high quality iron found in meats is easier for the human body to use than iron from plant sources. As well, this "meat" iron aids absorption of iron from other sources.

"We can all do ourselves a favor—maybe take the time this month during National Meat Month—to consider our total diet and ensure we do eat a variety of foods in balance and moderation," she says.

From an evolutionary standpoint humans have descended from a long line of meat eaters. During the hundred thousand or so years before plants were domesticated, our paleolithic ancestors derived 35 per cent of their calories from meat. These ancestors ate 10 times the amount of red meat Canadians eat now.

Wheat and rice came much later in man's history. Cereal grains were an insignificant part of early man's diet. Only after agriculture began to flourish about 10,000 years ago, did wheat and rice become a staple of modern man.

Non-human primates are also omnivorous. Baboons and chimpanzees are devoted hunters who prey on small animals. Studies have shown these animals would choose to eat more meat if it were more readily available.

Contact: *Aileen Whitmore*
427-2412

Generations study looks at retirement, stake in farm

Definitions of retirement and how newcomers such as daughters-in-law fit into the farm family business are two of the issues examined in **Generations in Alberta Farming Families.**

The report details the research findings of two University of Alberta family study professors. For their study, a team of Alberta Agriculture district home economists interviewed 74 farm families during the summer of 1990. The study's aim was to broaden understanding of retirement and of interpersonal relationships in farm families, as farm families provide a special case of both.

Norah Keating, chair of the family studies department and the report's co-author, says the research findings that particularly stood out for her were about retirement and how much time it takes for a newcomer to become part of the farm business.

"One of the most striking findings concerning retirement was the difference in meaning of retirement held by various members of the family," Keating and colleague Brenda Munro wrote in their final report. "Older men saw retirement as a relief from the physical burdens of work and the emotional burdens of management. For most, continued ownership was not a retirement issue. They felt that a person was retired when he was no longer actively involved on the farm."

However, for the younger generation, ownership was part of their retirement definition, leaving the whole family with the problem of resolving the differences. "Families might be able to do more informed transfer planning if they better understood how each viewed retirement and the ideal timing of entry and exit," is how Keating and Munro suggest bridging this generation gap.

Family stake, or the commitment of the family members to the farm business was another important element in the research. In particular, the stake of the newcomer and how these people, usually daughters-in-law, are brought into the business was interesting to Keating.

Level of stake wasn't as much a generational issue as theory suggested, and the "receiving" women were most likely to have a low stake compared to other family members. Munro and Keating speculated this may be because most are relative newcomers to both family and farm and haven't had time to develop a commitment, or their stake isn't developed because they are excluded from decision making.

In a positive sense Keating says there's more evidence that women are more involved in the farm business. Stake, however, requires that family members, especially the newcomers, are planned into the business.

"The study can help a two or more generation family look at these types of issues in their own family and business," says Jean Wilson, Alberta Agriculture's provincial family resource management specialist.

Alberta Agriculture district offices all have a copy of the **Generations in Alberta Farming Families** report. The report is available for loan. District staff can also provide detailed information on retirement planning and related issues.

Farm succession and related topics are also on the agenda at the annual Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conferences. MAP'92 is March 1 through 4 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

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Brochures and other conference information are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices

A relatively new organization in Alberta is also interested in successful family businesses. Two chapters of the Canadian Association for Family Enterprize (CAFE) are now active in Edmonton and Calgary. The CAFE mission is "to promote the well being and understanding of responsible family enterprize".

Laura Palmer, a founding member of CAFE Calgary and a rancher in the Millarville area, sees the organization as beneficial to farm family businesses. One of her short term goals is more agricultural industry involvement in CAFE as "the fundamental family business in this province, needs the type of support CAFE offers in order to endure".

Palmer and another Calgary chapter member have approached agricultural organizations to talk about CAFE. She was a guest speaker at the Alberta Potato Marketing Board's annual conference and found her audience "receptive". Palmer can be contacted in Calgary at 283-5253.

CAFE Edmonton is holding a Family Day forum on February 17. Opening speaker is Rosabelle Daugela, current president of IBEC, a family agribusiness in Spruce Grove. When her husband died in 1990, she and her family were faced with winding down or going ahead with the family business.

Among the other topics on the seminar agenda are: passing on your business; tax tips and traps in business succession; all in the family and how to keep it that way; successor and personal development; and, a spousal guide to the basics of private enterprize. For more information, contact Patrick Duffy at 487-7571.

Contact:	*Jean Wilson*	*427-2412*
	Norah Keating	*492-5771*
	Laura Palmer	*283-5253*

CELEBRATING ALBERTA'S FAMILIES

Engineering special crop equipment

If the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre (AFMRC) was writing a classified ad for one of their new projects it might read something like this: *Farmers wanted with experience growing speciality crops to detail their equipment problems, concerns and opinions.*

Diversifying into speciality crops comes not only with the potential of better profits, but with the costs of equipment needed to grow and harvest crops such as beans, lentils and peas says Rob Maze, an AFMRC project engineer.

"Farmers are looking to diversify, but at a minimum cost. Some farmers are reluctant to try new crops because of the high cost of new machinery," he says. "New machinery, however, may not be the only answer."

While some farmers are buying new machinery for special crops, some are trying to use conventional cereal grain machinery to do the same job. "Both approaches can work, and both have their difficulties," says Maze.

New machinery is expensive. It will do the job, but also requires proper setup by the farmer and some know-how Modifying existing machinery is cheaper, but in some cases just doesn't work. So, Maze and other engineers at the centre are looking for ways they can help farmers make equipment decisions that will make crop diversification easier and less costly for the farmer.

"Our first step is to find out what the problems are," says Maze. "We think the best people to ask about the problems are farmers, so we want to tap into their experience. Any problems or thoughts producers have about special crop machinery would be appreciated.

"Once we know the problems, then we can start working on the solutions. Obviously, AFMRC isn't going to have all the answers to begin with, but hopefully we can become a resource to special crop farmers."

Producers and producer groups who want to provide their input to AFMRC research projects can call Maze at 329-1212 in Lethbridge, or write him at 3000 College Drive South, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 1L6.

Contact: *Rob Maze*
329-1212

AFMRC examines spraying bean crops

Flat fan nozzles and lower water rates were two of the better ways to spray edible beans when combating fungus problems a recent study by the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre (AFMRC) in Lethbridge discovered.

The AFMRC and the special crops group in Alberta's southern region have begun studying sprayer nozzles to see which one provides the best results says Rob Maze, an AFMRC project engineer. "Controlling fungus in edible bean crops grown under irrigation in southern Alberta can cost producers around $35 an acre, so the most effective and efficient method of spraying is important."

"Hopefully, by increasing the application efficiency we can help reduce some of the higher input costs for farmers," he adds.

So far the study has provided some answers. Tests comparing 40, 60 and 80 l/ac. water rates showed the 40l/ac. rate put the most chemical on the beans when using flat fan nozzles. Varying pressures from 40 to 90 psi. didn't affect the amount of chemical on the bean. "The effect of the pressure wasn't what we expected, since sprayer research has been showing that high pressures usually give better chemical deposit," Maze says.

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Study results also showed hollow cone nozzles generally deposited less chemical on the beans that the flat fan nozzles. "Changing the way the hollow cone nozzles are placed on the boom could improve their results," notes Mazes. Another element of the project was to see how much interest producers had in the subject Maze says. "The project was really a preliminary study. If farmers want tests on different nozzle set-ups, work could continue this summer. We will be looking to producers for input this winter to see if testing should continue."

Producers interested in this project, or other special crop machinery problems, can contact the AFMRC at 329-1212 or write it at 3000 College Drive South, Lethbridge, T1K 1L6.

Contact: *Rob Maze*
329-1212

Oilseed outlook not optimistic

A less optimistic world oilseed outlook than even the world grain complex points to continued low Prairie canola prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Adequate world soybean supplies and the fact most of the credit that's been granted to the former Soviet Union is for wheat hasn't allowed improvements in the world oilseed market," says Charlie Pearson.

World oilseed production is currently estimated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) at 224 million tonnes, up three per cent from 1990-91.

Pearson says shifts in the oil meal price relationship have also had major implications for canola prices. Nearby contract soybean oil futures prices have held in the 18.6 to 19.7 cents per pound range, down two to two and half cents from January 1991 levels. Nearby contract meal prices have held in the $(U.S.)169 to $178 per ton range, about a $10 increase from last January.

"Large U.S. soybean crush based on good sales opportunities for meal and slow soybean oil exports have resulted in this change," says Pearson. "Given the higher percentage of vegetable oil in canola, this change is more negative for canola than it has been for soybeans," he adds.

Prairie canola prices are below year ago levels reflecting the lower soybean oil prices. Nearby contract canola futures prices held in the $260 to $270 per tonne range during January. Local cash bids during January ranged from $220 to $230 per tonne."The short term outlook is for Alberta canola prices to remain in the $220 to $235 per tonne range," Pearson says.

Assuming favorable conditions for South American soybean production, Pearson says both canola and flaxseed prices are expected to drift "sideways" in their current trading ranges during the winter.

Contact: *Charlie Pearson*
427-5386

Cream of crop forage competition deadline March 1

Before you feed all of your best hay or silage, save a sample to enter in the third annual Alberta Dairy Congress forage competition.

"Your entry could bring you fame and fortune," says Roger Andreiuk, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Leduc. "And you just have enough time now to meet the March 1 entry deadline."

The competition showcases quality hay and silage produced in Western Canada. "This year's congress theme is 'cream of the crop' and certainly this competition in the last two years has attracted examples of excellent forage production from across Alberta and into B.C.," he says. "The competition is also a real opportunity to see how your hay or silage stacks up against that produced somewhere else," he adds.

Prizes are awarded in five classes and producers can enter one exhibit per class from their 1991 production. The classes are legume hay, grass-legume hay, grass hay, haylage and cereal silage. First place finishers receive $100, second place $50 with $25 for third. The top five entries in each class will be displayed at the June 4 through 6 Alberta Dairy Congress in Leduc.

"As well, a challenge trophy is awarded for the best overall entry based on a feed analysis as well as other judging criteria," says Andreiuk.

Hay entries must be securely bound and tied in one-third square bale size. Round bale hay entries are accepted but must be securely tied as described. Silage and haylage must be submitted in an airtight container or bag, preferably frozen to preserve quality. Five pound samples—about a bread bag size stuffed full—are required.

All entry samples should be clearly labelled with your name, address, crop kind, cut and class. Special labels are available at the Alberta Agriculture Leduc office. Call there at 986-8985 for more information.

Contact: *Roger Andreiuk*
986-8985

Agri-News briefs

Fertilizer program application deadline extended

Alberta Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley has extended the Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan deadline to February 28, 1992. "Many producers, especially those affected by drought in northeastern Alberta, are experiencing difficulty in meeting their financial obligations. Municipal representatives have requested that the deadline be extended to give farmers more time to apply," he says. The Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection plan has been in effect since 1985 and provided over $135 million in rebates. The program officially ended on July 31, 1991. However, since purchases must be paid for at the time of application, farmers were given until January 31, 1992 to apply. Applications can be made at Alberta Agriculture district offices. For more information, contact Lloyd Andruchow in Edmonton at 427-5672.

'91 trade review shows higher U.S. beef imports

The quantity of beef imported into Canada was up 18 per cent in 1991 compared to 1990. "The trend is particularly alarming because most of the increase was in high value cuts imported from the U.S. that have a market impact," says Ron Gietz, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Last year was the fifth consecutive year of increased imports from the U.S. Agriculture Canada preliminary estimates also indicated a slight increase in beef exports. The two per cent increase was primarily due to a slight increase in shipments to the U.S. Exports to Japan decreased for the second straight year. Slaughter cattle exports from Alberta to the U.S. reached a new record high of 257,831 head in 1991. More than 46,000 head of feeder cattle were shipped from Alberta to Ontario last year. That total was the lowest level since 1984. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Forage seed market still quiet

Quiet forage seed markets means it's less and less likely there'll be a significant price rally in clovers says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Usually the late winter/early spring period is an important time for clover seed use in the U.S.," says Al Dooley. "Seed must be bought, processed and shipped in time to meet this high demand period. If we are to see any significant change in the clover situation, it will have to happen in the next few weeks." Major forage seed prices remain mostly steady he adds. Fescue has the best chance for upward price movement he adds. "But that potential is modest, based on what we know now, as fescue prices are already near their long-term average." For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Weakened Canadian dollar brings positive development to hog producers

Canadian slaughter hog prices moved lower along with American prices in January says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Alberta prices dropped below the one dollar per kilogram level, but climbed back above the $1 level later in the month," says Ron Gietz. He adds a positive development for Canadian producers was the decline in the value of the Canadian dollar. "As with other livestock, the Canada/U.S. exchange rate has an important influence on slaughter hog prices," he notes. The recent decline in the slaughter hog market was bad news for Alberta farrow-to-finish producers he says. "Data from our department's production economics branch shows negative returns," he says. "However margins, so far, haven't been as negative as they were during the 1988-89 price low, thanks to lower feed costs." For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Feeder cattle market fluctuates in January

Unlike the fed cattle market, the feeder cattle market saw no pronounced trends during January says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Prices seemed to fluctuate from week-to-week and market-to-market," says Ron Gietz. "There was definitely a prevailing sentiment in the marketplace that feeder cattle prices had to go lower, but there was also a limited amount of optimism generated from the increase in fed cattle prices." Overall, feeder cattle prices did trend lower in January. Quotations for almost all feeder classes were lower in late January than for late December. Southern Alberta markets showed the largest declines, and in general heifer prices were softer than steer prices in comparable weight ranges. One class bucked the lower price trend. Quotations for 500 to 600 lb. steer calves were steady to higher than the month before. Seasonally light volumes and interest in grass cattle probably helped this market he says. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

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January lamb prices top 1990 levels

Feeder lamb prices ranging as high as $74/cwt in January hit levels not seen during 1991 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Feeder lambs brought $55 to $71/cwt and ranged up to the $74 level," says Jo Ann Sandhu. "Although slaughter lamb prices can be expected to increase seasonally at the beginning of a new year, January 1991, also marked the beginning of a period of real recovery in lamb markets," she adds. At Canada West Foods in Innisfail, railgrade bids moved up from $1.10 to $1.13/kg. At Fort Macleod, slaughter lambs for export to the U.S. brought $54/cwt. Sandhu adds Alberta prices for slaughter lambs are likely to continue to be stronger in the first half of 1991, with the market peak coming at Easter. "If the Canadian dollar weakens, lamb prices may improve even more," she says. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Knowlton Nash talks about agricultural image

If Canadian agriculture is to avoid economic disintegration, the industry must step up its efforts to make the urban public aware of the economics of farming and its role in Canadian society and the economy. That's the message veteran CBC news anchor Knowlton Nash is taking across Canada in the 1992 Klinck lecture series. Nash will be in Alberta March 2 through 4 delivering his "communicating a positive image of agriculture to the public" speech to chapters of the Alberta Institute of Agrologists. For more information, on his six stops contact: Ben Frobel in Red Deer at 340-5329; Harry Sugimoto in Calgary at 292-3731; Grant Gillund in Vermilion at 853-8109; John Stephen in Edmonton at 986-6895; Phil Sandberg in Lethbridge at 328-1133; and, Nancy Boutilier in Medicine Hat at 529-3677.

Western Canadian dairy seminar March 11-13

A look at the next decade and beyond is on the agenda at the 1991 Western Canadian Dairy Seminar in Red Deer March 11 through 13. Speakers will discuss management, feed and marketing during the seminar program. The seminar is designed for participants who are interested in improving their dairy production knowledge and decision making. For more information, contact Kathy Bush at the University of Alberta's animal science department in Edmonton at (403)492-2601 or FAX (403)492-9130.

Peace country classic March 12-14

The largest agricultural show north of Edmonton is scheduled for Evergreen Park in Grande Prairie March 12 through 14. With a theme of "share the vision" the Classic includes livestock and seed shows as well as exhibits. A new feature in 1992 will be exhibits from 10 district museums and the Grande Prairie Pioneer Museum. For more information, contact the Grande Prairie County Agricultural Society at 532-3279.

Field crop updates in Gilby and Lacombe

Two field crops updates will be held in Gilby and Lacombe on March 10 and 11. The one-day seminars will include a look at crop varieties and management, the County of Lacombe weed control program, general weed control, weed resistance and soils and fertilizers. For more information, contact the Alberta Agriculture Lacombe district office at 782-3301 or 340-7161.

Watch for beef ads during the Olympics

Television viewers tuned into the winter Olympics will see ads about eating beef. The Beef Information Centre is an official supplier to Canada's 1992 Olympic teams. Part of the television advertisement will focus on the importance of beef's iron content for peak performance. The Alberta Cattle Commission made a significant contribution to this 1992 Olympic beef promotion. Swimmer Mark Tewksbury, a world record holder, is the official beef spokesman. The backstroker will be one of many Canadian athletes including world champion figure skater Kurt Browning featured in an Olympic cookbook with "beef for peak performance" recipes and nutrition tips. In January, a unique sport nutrition program was also launched by the Sports Medicine Council of Canada. The Beef Information Centre is corporate sponsor of the program designed to make Canadian athletes and coaches more aware of the importance of nutrition in maximizing sports performance. A workbook and video are part of the educational material available. For more information in Alberta, contact the Beef Information Centre in Calgary at 275-5890.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

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Cow nutrition affects colostrum quantity

Colostrum is essential to the newborn calf, and the quality and quantity of that critical first milk depends on proper pre-calving nutrition for the cow.

"Cows that are underfed prior to calving and are below a condition score of 2.5 to 3.0 (on a 5 point scale) won't be able to produce the quantity of colostrum required by the calf," says Barry Yaremcio, Alberta Agriculture ruminant nutritionist. "If cows are underfed before calving, they produce 60 per cent less colostrum than a well-fed cow. Proper pre-calving nutrition is essential to provide a strong healthy calf at birth and to develop the colostrum needed to provide the calf with immunity once it's born."

Producers should note young cows, especially first calf heifers, are more susceptible to nutrient deficiencies than mature cows says Yaremcio. "Not only are these young cows developing a calf, but they must also maintain their own growth rates to reach mature body size."

Cows in poor condition and cows that require assistance during calving are also more likely to provide inadequate amounts of colostrum for their calves.

"Calves that are pulled or born to cows in poor condition will also take longer to stand and suckle. This is detrimental to calves because they need to consume about three to four litres of colostrum in the first 12 hours of their lives," he says. After that time, the large openings in the intestine close and the large colostrum proteins can't pass through intact. If the colostrum isn't passed intact, it won't provide immunity.

Another problem associated with pulled calves is more stomach acid than is found in calves from unassisted births. Higher stomach acid levels will denature colostrum, rendering it less effective in providing immunity to the calf.

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Colostrum, is essential to provide the newborn calf with passive immunity. Calves, unlike some other animals, can't obtain immunity from their mothers prior to calving. As well, high quality colostrum contains three times more fat and protein than normal milk, and is a very good energy source for the young calf.

"Calves that obtain the proper amount and quality of colostrum within the first 12 hours of life will grow faster than those that are colostrum deficient. Plus, these calves have greater disease resistance," he says. Yaremcio also notes cows that provide higher amounts of colostrum tend to be better milkers.

Contact: *Barry Yaremcio*
427-6361

This Week

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Laundry practices a link in pesticide safety

The final, and not-to-be ignored, link in farm pesticide safety is the person who washes pesticide-soiled clothing says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"At the same time we talk to farmers about the kinds of protective clothing and equipment they should wear when applying pesticides, we also stress it's equally important to take precautions when laundering that clothing," says Bertha Eggertson, provincial clothing and textiles specialist.

The message about laundry practices is being heard, Eggertson adds, but there are still people who need to hear and follow the appropriate procedures. "In a survey of Alberta farm families last year we found that some practices are becoming more common. For example, twice as many launderers are line drying pesticide-soiled clothing compared to our last survey in 1984. However the numbers are still too low. Only 30 per cent of the respondents line dry. Line drying eliminates possible contamination of their drier, as well as increases the chemical breakdown of pesticide residues."

Another area that needs attention is handling soiled clothing. "Just over 10 per cent of survey respondents used protective gloves to handle soiled clothing. We recommend unlined nitrile gloves, the same type we recommend the farmer wear when applying pesticides. Latex gloves deteriorate too quickly.

"Gloves are particularly important if a concentrated pesticide was spilled on the clothing, so some onus would fall on the pesticide user to alert whose washing their clothing about the pesticide they're using. We recommend discarding any garment saturated with a concentrated pesticide because of the difficulty in removing the pesticide."

The 1991 survey looked at two groups. One group had been surveyed previously in 1984 and another new group of respondents. Eggertson recently completed analyzing the responses from the survey undertaken last summer.

An encouraging practice was that over 70 per cent of the survey respondents separated the pesticide-soiled clothing from other work clothes to prevent cross-contamination. This was up 10 per cent from the 1984 survey.

Also positive is that approximately one third of soiled clothing is laundered the same day. "If the clothing is washed immediately after spraying is completed for the day, it's easier to remove the pesticide from the fabric," she notes.

The survey also found more people are using a hot water wash. This also increases the pesticide removal rate. As well, increased numbers were using more detergent.

However, says Eggertson, fewer people are pre-treating contaminated clothing as a way to reduce the contamination level. "Our recommendation is to pre-treat clothing with a stain removal product if a emulsifiable formulation pesticide was used."

For more information on recommended protective clothing and laundering practices, please contact your local Alberta Agriculture district home economist.

A brochure, "Handling pesticides are you protected?" (Homedex 1353-90), is also available from district offices, or by writing the Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Bertha Eggertson
427-2412

Grasshopper forecast predicts slightly higher numbers

Grasshopper numbers are increasing in some regions, although the 1992 forecast doesn't set alarm bells ringing.

"A small increase in the average grasshopper count indicates the problem won't disappear, and could increase if dry weather conditions remain," says Mike Dolinski, head of entomology and rat control in Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch.

The 1992 grasshopper forecast is based on survey data collected in late July and early August by municipal fieldmen in 52 counties, municipal districts and improvement districts. The 1991 survey included 1,777 sites across the province.

The total area rated as severely infested has increased slightly from seven to nine per cent (see attached map). "The combined area expected to be moderately to very severely infested has also increased. Dry weather contributed to those predictions. The potential for crop damage could be reduced by spring moisture," he says.

The 1991 grasshopper forecast was quite accurate he notes. Expanded east central infestations and hot spots in some southwestern counties were expected. Significant numbers of grasshoppers did hatch in those areas. Spraying was widespread, totalling over 24,000 acres.

"Above normal precipitation in June did reduce the severity of infestations across much of province, but didn't change the overall pattern of infestation we've had since 1985-86," notes Dolinski.

Smaller infestations occurred west and north of Edmonton last year, as well as in other areas that experienced warm, dry weather during July and August. "Breeding populations could cause localized problems there this year. Spring moisture can reduce those numbers. Farmers should monitor sandy grassland areas. Grasshoppers move from these breeding sites to adjoining fields. Spraying these hatch sites reduces the overall need for spraying, and stops grasshoppers before they cause crop damage," he says.

Contact: Mike Dolinski
427-7098

Unusually warm weather in January

Warm, dry weather in January provided almost spring-like conditions across most of the province says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

The average monthly temperature, based on data recorded at 26 weather stations across the province, was 9.3C warmer than the average for the period 1951 through 1980 says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

"January's monthly temperatures varied from 6.5 to 12C above normal," says Dzikowski. "While the weather was warm and dry, it was very similar to February 1991, when temperatures were 8C warmer than normal. This year the warm weather has come a month earlier."

The warm weather contributed to the average 15.4 millimetres (mm) of precipitation that fell across the province, well below the long term average of 23.7 mm.

The northern part of the province received the most precipitation in January says Dzikowski. The highest precipitation total during the month was 27.3 mm recorded at Grande Prairie. This was 81 per cent of its normal monthly total of 33.9 mm. Along the eastern border, Cold Lake received 24.2 mm, nine per cent above the normal level of 22.1 mm.

Central Alberta—north of Red Deer, east of Whitecourt and south of Fort McMurray—has had the most snow so far this winter. "This should help replenish dugouts and soil moisture levels in the northeast," says Dzikowski.

On the temperature side, Fort Chipewyan recorded the coldest average of the month at -18.2C. "Still, that average was about eight degrees above normal," he adds.

The warmest average temperature for the month was 0.9C, recorded at Lethbridge. That average was 11.2 degrees above normal says Dzikowski. Peace River was 11.3 degrees above its normal, recording an average temperature of -9.0C.

One explanation for the change in temperature, says Dzikowski, is El Nino. "El Nino, a large area of warm water just off the west coast of South America, shifts normal wind and storm tracks, and produces unexpected weather patterns. It's also believed to be responsible for the mild winter weather, which could continue into the spring," says Dzikowski.

For more information, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Teacher applications open for third summer ag institute

Summer school may have a dreaded ring for some, but for 30 teachers the Summer Agricultural Education Institute offers a unique opportunity for agricultural literacy.

The third institute will be held at Lakeland College in Vermilion August 10 through 21. The full credit, fourth year level university course is open to practising Alberta teachers of all grade levels and fourth year education students.

"The institute introduces its students to the diversity of Alberta's primary industry and allows them to develop lesson plans to take back to their classrooms," says Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture's Agriculture in the Classroom program. "As well, institute graduates become part of a growing network linking educators and the agricultural industry."

The institute has an active learning environment she adds. Participants receive instruction from guest speakers, take tours examining production and processing through to research and career links, and have an over-night, one-day farm stay.

"The program shows the participants modern agriculture is much more than farming by examining characteristics such as diversity, agriculture's economic importance to society and soil and water conservation," says Gabert.

Previous participants give the institute rave reviews. "Not just for the agricultural awareness, but also for the professional development," Gabert says. "They are connecting with agriculture and agricultural issues, taking home resource material and getting contacts with the industry. As well, there are the more intangible personal and career benefits."

Success of the first two institutes in Lethbridge and Olds have also kept the partnership with the University of Lethbridge, as institute graduates will continue to receive a fourth year university credit.

Gabert encourages teachers interested in the institute to apply quickly. The deadline is April 15. "We've already had a number of requests, and as space is limited, applications should be sent in as soon as possible."

Brochures with application forms are available by calling the Agriculture in the Classroom program in Edmonton at 427-2402.

Created for its agricultural awareness value, the institute has received considerable support from the agricultural industry notes Gabert. "The support is on a lot of levels. United Farmers of Alberta fund the scholarships. A variety of commodity groups and agribusinesses come to the mini-expo industry show. We have a number of farms and agriculture related organizations on our tour stops, plus the individual families that host a teacher for a brief stay at their farm. All types of agricultural industry people are the guest speakers and instructors."

Gabert notes the institute is being fine tuned every year. For example this year its dates won't conflict with the August long weekend. As well, participants are given a free Sunday to recharge themselves for the last half of the program.

The institute will be officially opened on August 12 with a gala event that will be open to the public. "Teachers from across the province, farm families and the general public are welcome at the agricultural trade fair. We also hope to have some special entertainment," says Gabert.

Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2403

Entries due for ROP ram test station

Applications are now due to reserve pen space for the 18th annual Alberta ROP ram test station says an Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist.

Interested sheep producers should send in their applications as soon as possible as pen space at Olds College will be at a premium this year says Kim Stanford of the beef cattle and sheep branch.

"An early test is now underway for fall-born rams. Angora goat and meat goat performance tests will also be conducted this summer," says Stanford. "Entry dates for this year's ram test are March 4, March 18 and April 1."

The test is open to ram lambs eligible for registration and born in the fall of 1991 or later. When brought in for entry to the test station, Suffolk and Hampshire rams must weigh between 50 and 75 lbs. Rams of other breeds must weigh between 45 and 70 lbs.

"All rams must have their feet trimmed and be tattooed prior to entry," notes Stanford.

Health regulations for admission to the test are quite strict Stanford adds. "Rams are only admitted to the test after undergoing a veterinary inspection and must be found free from evidence of infectious disease. All new contributors to the test are also required to undergo a flock veterinary inspection."

Rams that complete the test with above average growth rates for their breed and pass a physical inspection are then eligible for the Alberta ROP Ram Test Station sale which will be held in Olds on July 4, 1992.

Applications are available from your local Alberta Agriculture district office, or by calling Stanford at 382-4187 in Lethbridge.

Contact: Kim Stanford
382-4187

Agri-News briefs

Lakeland's "Little Royal" runs March 20-21

Lakeland College's Little Royal weekend returns March 20 through 22 at the Vermilion campus. The open house is 10 a.m. through 5 p.m. on the Friday and Saturday, offering the public an opportunity to explore Lakeland College's courses including agriculture, environmental sciences, business administration, child care, drama, oilfield operations, academic upgrading and university transfer. Visitors can take "wise-up" workshops on Saturday afternoon. A number of special events will also be featured including a Friday pancake breakfast, farm tours, Lloydminster campus tours, a Saturday coffee house, a horse show, intercollegiate rodeo Saturday and Sunday and 4-H and Western Canadian Intercollegiate Judging competition. For more information, call Lakeland College in Vermilion at 853-8400.

Provincial dairy distinction award nominations open

Nominations are currently being accepted for the provincial dairy award of distinction. Any group or individual may submit the resume of a person who has made a major contribution to the dairy industry. One, or possibly two recipients, will be selected with the awards presented November 4 at the Westerner fall dairy show awards banquet. Recipients may be of any age, or the nominee may be deceased. Judging criteria require nominees to be or have been a dairy farmer, active in or made contributions to the dairy industry or related organizations, and be or have been an active community member. The United Farmers of Alberta and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce are award sponsors. Nominee resumes should be submitted by April 30 to the Westerner Exposition Association, Provincial Dairy Award of Distinction, Box 176, Red Deer, Alberta, T4N 5E8.

Truck promotion spread certified seed message

The Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CGSA) hopes a sweepstakes program will encourage farmers to use certified seed. Farmers who buy pedigreed seed can enter their names in a draw for a variety of prizes. "The advantages of certified seed make it the cornerstone of a good crop. It's weed and disease free, and has germination and vigor," says Graydon Bowman, CSGA education and promotion committee chairman. "Still, farmers use bin-run seed. With this promotion we hope to make farmers more aware of certified seed." The grand prize is a 1992 Dodge Dakota pickup. Regional prizes of $500 in certified seed will also be awarded. Entries close in June 1992 and the prize winners will be announced at the CSGA national meeting in Guelph in July. The program was launched last fall. For more information, contact the CSGA office in Ottawa at (613)236-0497.

Canada will host 1994 world Charolais technical conference

Canadian Charolais breeders will host the first ever world Charolais technical conference in 1994. The technical conference won't be a full-fledged world conference, but two to three days of technical sessions. "This is indeed a honor and will help further the Canadian Charolais industry's commitment to the technical advancement of the Charolais breed," says Ken Aylesworth, general manager of the Canadian Charolais Association. Registration protocols, transferring animals between countries and other technical topics are likely agenda items. Aylesworth says he expects three to four delegates from each of the more than 30 World Charolais Federation member countries to attend the conference. For more information, contact Aylesworth in Calgary at 250-9242.

Farm implement act moves to Farmers' Advocate

Alberta's Farmers' Advocate has a new responsibility as administrator of the Farm Implement Act. Cliff Downey took charge of these new duties at the beginning of the year. Questions can be directed to Room 305, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or call (403) 427-2188, FAX (403) 427-3918. The Farmers' Advocate can also be reached at 427-2433.

CHC meets in Ottawa March 7-11

The Canadian Horticultural Congress (CHC) will hold its 70th annual meeting in Ottawa March 7 through 11. The meeting theme is "partners in progress" and the agenda features a number of topics related to the horticultural sector. For more information, contact the CHC office in Ottawa at (613) 226-4187.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

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For immediate release

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AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch

February 24, 1992
For immediate release

Medium quality wheat offers market, yield advantages

As Alberta farmers start making cropping decisions, they may want to consider growing a different class of wheat.

Currently Prairie production is dominated by traditional Hard Red Spring wheats. These hard, high protein wheats are recognized worldwide for their top quality and will continue to be sold for the bread market in such places as the Commonwealth of Independent States says Charlie Pearson, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

However, the wheat growth markets are south east Asia and the Middle East. These markets need medium quality wheats. World demand for these types of wheats between 1967 and 1981 grew by 84 per cent. In comparison, the demand for hard wheats grew by only 48 per cent.

"The improved market potential of medium quality wheats reflects the changing needs of our customers," says Pearson. "Demand for medium quality wheats is increasing as a result of markets being developed by the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB). Both Asia and the Middle East use this type of wheat for noddles, steamed buns and flat breads. Canadian farmers will have to grow a different class of wheat to satisfy these market needs."

Canada Prairie Spring (CPS) wheats are medium quality spring wheats suitable for those new markets. Established in 1985, they are often referred to as "triple M" wheats says Mark Olson, an Alberta Agriculture regional crop production specialist. The "Ms" are for medium protein, medium gluten strength and medium kernel hardness. CPS wheats are also divided into sub-classes based on kernel color. Red kernel varieties are Biggar, Cutler and Oslo. Genesis (formerly HY355) is white.

Olson says another reason farmers may be attracted to CPS wheats is because they have higher yields than traditional Hard Red Spring wheats. "Farmers are taking a second look because of the gross return per acre. The higher yields compensate for the 10 to 15 per cent price difference. Looking to the future, researchers believe they can accomplish an even wider advantage than the current 15 to 20 per cent higher yields."

(Cont'd)

Medium quality wheat offers market, yield advantages (cont'd)

While growing CPS wheats is similar to harder wheats, there are some subtle differences notes Olson. CPS wheats are later maturing, with the exception of Cutler, so must be seeded early. Shallow seeding is best and the seeding rate is about 25 per cent more than other wheats. CPS wheats are less competitive with weeds, so control is crucial, especially of wild oats.

Olson encourages farmers interested in growing CPS wheats to contact their Alberta Agriculture district office for more information.

More farmers are trying the CPS wheats notes the Fairview based Olson. In the Peace region approximately 44,000 acres of CPS were grown in 1991, up from 14,000 acres the previous year.

Alberta farmers grew 230,000 acres of CPS wheats in the 1991-92 crop year. That total is just a fraction of the 7.2 million acres of spring wheats grown last year.

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Contact:	Charlie Pearson 427-5386	Mark Olson 835-2291

February 24, 1992
For immediate release

Irrigated alfalfa seed consistent money maker

For some southern Alberta farmers, irrigated alfalfa seed has been a bright light while low prices for more traditional cash crops have cast a gloomy shadow on agricultural skies.

"Top managers have seen net returns of more than $500 per acre," says Dave McKenzie of Alberta Agriculture's irrigation branch. McKenzie, an irrigation technologist, is based in Brooks where irrigated alfalfa seed growers are concentrated. Growers are also scattered around Vauxhall, Iron Springs and Picture Butte.

"Management is a critical part of growing a successful crop," adds McKenzie. "Timing is very important. For example, an hour spent deciding when to irrigate typically returns the grower between $200 and $400."

Although alfalfa seed was first irrigated in the Eastern Irrigation District about 35 years ago, not much was known about growing irrigated alfalfa seed as recently as five years ago. But hit-and-miss production and wildly fluctuating yields have become a thing of the past. Yields have stabilized in a range providing a fair return on investment to producers. McKenzie attributes an aggressive producer association and assistance from Alberta Agriculture as factors in the turnaround.

To accomplish dependable yields and achieve consistent prices, growers had to sort out many factors that complicate growing irrigated alfalfa seed. That range of complications is intertwined. The alfalfa requires cross-pollination by bees that prefer warm conditions, but a lush alfalfa crop can transpire enough to cool the air by 7°C.

"Easily the largest variable, however, is the irrigation itself," says McKenzie. "So, irrigation management strategies were necessary to fit within the small margin of error that exists, and prevent poorly-timed irrigation from ruining a crop's potential profits."

(Cont'd)

With this in the mind, the Irrigated Alfalfa Seed Producers Association decided to established guidelines that could be used to achieve consistent yields. A production club was set up in 1989 by some member growers to record as much production information as possible. Through this data they determined what practices encouraged top production.

"By using theory and trial-and-error, this group increased production to double the district average in three years--and there's no end in sight," says McKenzie.

Research work in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture is continuing, particularly in irrigation management strategies. For example, versatility in flood irrigation will be investigated this year on demonstration plots at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

The three most popular irrigation systems--pivot, flood and wheel--have different effects on alfalfa growth and so require different management. McKenzie says the continued research will develop and refine those irrigation management strategies. "This should ensure that irrigation isn't the most limiting factor in alfalfa seed production."

Moisture monitoring is also a major factor in successful production he adds. In the past, a soil auger was used. This time consuming and labour intensive method has been replaced by a technique developed with an Alberta Agriculture Farming for the Future grant.

Measuring moisture stress directly on the plant is more convenient, because the alfalfa requires some stress for top seed production he says. "Everything the plant has gone through is written there for you to read once you learn the language. But the language must be learned in the field. There are no shortcuts. You have to get out there to find out what's going on."

Another ingredient in the irrigated producers' recipe for success has been their choice of alfalfa seed varieties. The southern Alberta producers have concentrated on growing private varieties under contract, says McKenzie, for the premium price and immediate delivery. "With most contracts, the seed is trucked directly to the seed plant and payments are made shortly after cleaning. In some cases, there is also a guaranteed floor price."

(Cont'd)

Irrigated alfalfa seed consistent money maker (cont'd)

Seed prices dropped considerably this fall due to overproduction. The long range outlook is for prices to remain under a dollar per pound. "This further emphasizes the need for consistent yields as you can't afford a 'wreck' at 70¢/lb., but you can make a profit if you can grow a consistent 600 lb./ac. of seed," says McKenzie.

The common seed market is dominated by dryland producers in northern Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

For more information about growing irrigated alfalfa seed, contact McKenzie in Brooks at 362-1212.

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Contact: Dave McKenzie
362-1212

February 24, 1992
For immediate release

Timing, source of colostrum critical

Timing and source of colostrum are critical to a newborn calf that doesn't get its required first milk from its mother says an Alberta Agriculture ruminant nutritionist.

Calves require colostrum for passive immunity to protect them from diseases for about the first month of life. Newborn calves should consume 10 per cent their body weight in colostrum within their first 12 hours of life.

"For a 85 to 90 lb. calf, this is three to four litres of colostrum," says Barry Yaremcio. "This quantity of colostrum contains about 80 to 100 grams of immunoglobulins, special proteins responsible for providing the calf with disease protection."

Timing is critical for the calf to be able to use the immunoglobulins. Immunoglobulin proteins must pass through the wall of the small intestine intact in order to be effective. "Large openings in the intestine close off by the time the calf is half a day old and that's why the colostrum must be consumed shortly after birth," he says.

Some signs a calf hasn't received any or not enough colostrum include walking around, bawling and looking for food. "They will become dull and lifeless and will lie around. They'll also have droopy ears and be constipated," Yaremcio says.

A lack of colostrum can have many causes he notes. Cows may prematurely let down milk or have no milk. Some might have large teats the calf can't suckle. The calf might become separated from the cow after birth. Or, a weak calf after a difficult birth may not be able to suckle.

"Producers need to be alert to all these potential problems and make an effort to ensure that every calf obtains sufficient colostrum," he says. "And if that colostrum isn't from the dam, there are a number of management strategies for the producer."

(Cont'd)

Timing, source of colostrum critical (cont'd)

First, if the calf requires supplemental colostrum, it should be fed by bottle rather than by tubing. Some researchers believe that tubing interferes with the development of the natural sucking behavior of the calf Yaremcio says. Suckling enhances a reflex reaction that allows milk to pass directly into the true stomach of the calf. This ensures better use of the colostrum.

If possible, it's important that the colostrum is from the same species of animal he adds. "In other words, beef colostrum for a beef calf and dairy colostrum for a dairy calf. It appears as though there are differences within the bovine species, so same type is recommended."

Producers can freeze and thaw excess colostrum from their own herd, or colostrum they purchase. Yaremcio advises placing the colostrum in a freezer bag and laying it flat on a cookie sheet. Freeze as soon as possible. The flat thin block is easy to store without damage and will thaw quickly when needed.

To thaw, place the package in lukewarm water, or defrost in the microwave. "Be sure to use a defrost setting. If the colostrum gets too hot during thawing--has hot spots warmer than 40°C--the immunoglobulin proteins will be damaged and lose their immunizing properties."

If a calf requires additional colostrum and same species colostrum isn't available, producers have two other options. One is cross-species colostrum.

Yaremcio advises farmers to ensure the colostrum they purchase is first milk. Colostrum concentrations drop dramatically and the required effect is not obtained from milk from a second or third milking.

As well, commerical colostrum can be used. Yaremcio's advice is to the read the label to see if the calf is able to drink the required volume to obtain the 80 to 100 grams of immuglobulins within the first 12 hours. "If the product you are selecting doesn't meet these requirements, try another," he advises.

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Contact: Barry Yaremcio
427-6361

February 24, 1992
For immediate release

Spring warble treatment only for clean-up

Spring warble treatment is only for cleaning up problems, and shouldn't be your primary control program says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Most cattle can be treated with systemic insecticides after March 1 says Ali Khan, a livestock entomologist. "Between 95 and 100 per cent of the grubs will be controlled if infested cattle are treated between March 1 and April 15 using a systemic insecticide. Control is reduced after this time," he says.

In late spring, a systemic insecticide sprayed directly into the warble opening will act both as a systemic and contact insecticide. "This probably provides better control than other applications of systemics," Khan adds.

In the spring, milking dairy animals can only be treated using rotenone. This is sprayed or scrubbed into open holes on a cow's back at three-week intervals during March, April and May.

Alberta producers are required to take active warble control measures by the Agricultural Pest Act. Both cattle producers and processors can incur economic losses from warble damage. The pest damages meat and hides of infested animals, reduces milk production in lactating cattle and lowers weight gains in calves.

Khan notes spring treatment for warbles has the additional benefit of controlling lice.

Alberta Agriculture recently published an updated factsheet on warble control. Khan says the factsheet provides farmers with information about the insect's biology and control methods, so they can better manage warble problems.

"Warble control in Alberta" (Agdex 420/651-1) is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or by writing the Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Ali Khan
427-5083

February 24, 1992
For immediate release

International symposium looks beyond traditional egg uses

An international symposium on non-conventional egg uses and newly emerging processing technologies will bring together research scientists and the Canadian egg industry this spring in Banff.

"In order for the Canadian egg industry to remain economically viable, and to reverse the current downward trend of shell egg consumption, the industry has begun to look--and needs to look--at new egg products and processing technologies," says Jeong Sim, chair of the symposium committee.

Sim is also a University of Alberta poultry nutrition and product technology professor. The university's animal science and extension faculties are hosts for the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency sponsored conference. The conference is scheduled for April 22 through April 25 at the Banff Springs Hotel.

The conference will be broken into four sessions. During the first full day of the conference, the agenda will be devoted to current world trends of egg use featuring speakers from North America, Europe, Japan, China and Korea.

"Research scientists from many disciplines have begun to look at the egg beyond its traditional use and to focus on the many economically viable new uses covering biology, food, health products and biotechnology. The final three conference sessions will look at particular research areas--separation technologies, non-food egg uses and functional/nutritional modification," says Sim. He adds the sessions speakers are experts from across Canada and around the world.

Sim says conference organizers are hopeful the symposium will draw processors. "There is a need for the industry to recognize the increasing importance of processing technology research."

For more information, contact Sim at (403)492-7687 or FAX (403)492-4265, or for telephone registration call Sheila at (403)492-3029 or FAX (403)492-0627.

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Contact: Dr. Jeong Sim
492-7682

February 24, 1992
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

NISA FARM FED DECLARATION APPLICATION EXTENDED TO MARCH 12

The national Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) committee has extended the deadline for submitting 1990 "Farm fed grain declarations--cattle and calves" forms to March 12, 1992. There was no change however, to the previously extended deadline for submitting basic NISA forms. That deadline was February 12. Producers originally had until February 12 to complete the optional farm fed declaration. However, delays in mailing out the forms resulted in the one month deadline extension. For more information, call the toll-free NISA hotline at 1-800-665-NISA.

ROLE OF AG IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR FEB. 27

The University of Alberta is offering a one day seminar looking at the role of agriculture in sustainable development from an ecological perspective. The seminar leader will be Stuart Hill, associate professor and director of ecological projects at McGill University's McDonald College. His presentation will cover the theory and practice of an agro-ecosystem where most energy is provided by the sun, most inputs would be generated from the farm from "wastes" and soil would be covered and conserved by a diverse range of crops. For more information, contact the faculty of extension, or to register by telephone call Sheila at 492-3029.

SHEPHERDING PROGRAM INTRODUCED AT OLDS COLLEGE

The traditions and skills of shepherding will be part of the first shepherding program in Alberta. The program will start March 2 at Olds College. Only 10 spaces are available for the four-week hands-on program emphasizing dog handling, horsemanship, flock management, predator control, camp management, range management, first aid and fire fighting. Ten professionals, each experienced in one or more facets of shepherding, are the program instructors. Shepherding is being rejuvenated in Western Canada. "Much of the recent interest in shepherding, I think, stems from the

(Cont'd)

SHEPHERDING PROGRAM INTRODUCED AT OLDS COLLEGE (Cont'd)

environmentally friendly application the practice has to range management and reforestation," says Mike Gillis, Olds College extension service's livestock production manager. As well, shepherding skills offer job opportunities. Entry level wages can range between $1,500 and $3,000 per month with the opportunity to advance to manager, owner and contractor positions. For more information, contact Gillis at 556-8313, or extension services at 556-8344.

ELK QUALIFY AS LIVESTOCK FOR TAX DEFERRAL

Elk farmers will qualify for a tax deferral if their herd was ordered destroyed says an Alberta Agriculture farm business management specialist. Paul Gervais says Revenue Canada has issued an interpretation bulletin (IT-427) stating "livestock includes any and all animals if they are kept by man and are maintained and bred under controlled conditions for profit". This interpretation, it's important to note says Gervais, comes after many elk herds were destroyed by statutory authority and questions were raised about the eligibility of elk farmers for a tax deferral. The deferral allows elk farmers to defer proceeds they received from the forced herd destruction, so they can rebuild their livestock base over the following tax year without a tax penalty. For more information, contact Gervais in Olds at 556-4250.

EASTERN ALBERTA FARMERS REMINDED OF TAX DEFERRAL ELIGIBILITY

Farmers who sold breeding livestock in 1991 and whose farm business is located in one of the designated drought areas in 1991 are reminded they may be eligible for a tax deferral on net sale income from breeding animals. The Drought Induced Sales of Breeding Animals program applies whether or not the farmer resides in the drought region, or had the herd cared for by someone else through a custom-care agreement says Paul Gervais of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch. The eligible areas are: the countries of Thorhild, Beaver, Athabasca, Smoky Lake, St. Paul, Two Hills, Vermilion River, Minburn and Lamont; the municipal districts of Acadia, Wainwright, Bonnyville and Westlock; special areas 2, 3 and 4; and,

(Cont'd)

EASTERN ALBERTA FARMERS REMINDED OF TAX DEFERRAL ELIGIBILITY (cont'd)

Improvement District 18 (south). Producers who took advantage of the program in 1990, and again are in an eligible area in 1991, may defer 1990 proceeds another year. Eligible producers can defer 30 per cent of sale income if they reduced their breeding herd by at least 15 per cent and less than 30 per cent. They are allowed a 90 per cent deferral if they sell 30 or more per cent of their herd. The deferred proceeds can be used to replenish their herd. Producers must request the deferral when they file their 1991 income tax return. District taxation offices can answer eligibility questions. For more information, contact Gervais in Olds at 556-4250.

DAIRY PRODUCTION BRANCH NAMES AWARD OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENTS

A total of 246 producers qualified for 1991 awards of excellence for quality milk and farm premises. The provincial winner, chosen from six regional winners with the lowest average bulk tank somatic cell counts, was Gary Jefferies of Olds. The other regional winners were: Rocklake Hutterian Brethren, Coaldale (south); Joseph Gendre, Jr., Erskine (north central); Cyril and Wanda Paul, Bruderheim (northeast); John and Wendy Reist, Hay Lakes (northwest); and, Paul Schoorlemmer, Rycroft (Peace). The award criteria include average standard plate count, all somatic cell counts, no positive inhibitors, all freezing points and average farm score. Alberta Agriculture's dairy production branch has recognized producers who achieve distinction in consistent production of superior quality milk combined with high scores from premises inspections for the past six years. The 1991 awards were based on production and inspections between October 1990 and September 30, 1991. For more information, contact Ed Bristow or David Domes in Wetaskiwin at 361-1223.

NEW ALBERTA AGRICULTURE PUBLICATIONS LIST AVAILABLE

The "1992 Alberta Agriculture Publications List" is now available. The list shows the publications available free of charge from Alberta Agriculture district offices and the Publications Office in Edmonton. Publications range from general agricultural information to specific topics in field crops,

(Cont'd)

NEW ALBERTA AGRICULTURE PUBLICATIONS LIST AVAILABLE

horticulture, livestock, soils, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics, home economics and insects/diseases/pests. For a copy of booklet, write the Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

AGRICULTURAL GROUPS TAKE AGRICULTURE TO SCHOOLS

During Agriculture Week 450 volunteers will visit over 900 Alberta classrooms to tell agriculture's story. This Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) was born in 1985 when five agriculture groups developed an agriculture program for presentation in urban and rural classrooms. The program has already reached over 140,000 elementary schools, and another 22,000 grade four students will be visited by CAP volunteers between March 9 and 13. CAP's theme for 1992 is "partners" says Mabel Hamilton CAP spokesperson. Volunteers will impress on the students that all Albertans are partners with farmers and everyone involved in the agricultural sector. The five organizations who developed CAP--the Alberta Cattle Commission, Agaware, Alberta Women in Support of Agriculture, Alberta Women's Institute and the Beef Information Centre--have been joined by five more organizations. They are the Alberta Egg Producers Board, the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board, the Alberta Milk Producers' Society, the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission and the Potato Growers of Alberta. Both the Minister of Agriculture, Ernie Isley, and the Minister of Education, Jim Dinning, have endorsed CAP. For more information, contact Mabel Hamilton at 224-2353 or Joanne Lemke at 275-4400.

OLDEST, LARGEST BULL TEST HOLD SALES NEXT MONTH

Billed as Canada's oldest and largest bull test, the Red Angus Breeders of Canada will sell the best of their test at two afternoon sales next month in Medicine Hat and Olds. An open house March 6 at the Cattleland Feedyards (eight and half miles north of Strathmore) precedes the sales. A total of 260 bulls from 45 breeders were on test this year. Only the top 60 per cent are put into the sale. The 19th annual sale at the Olds Cow Palace featuring 50

(Cont'd)

OLDEST, LARGEST BULL TEST HOLD SALES NEXT MONTH

bulls is Saturday March 28. The seventh annual sale in Medicine Hat (Pool Livestock Marketing Centre) with 100 bulls, is the previous week, March 21. For more information and sale catalogues, contact Don Conway at 746-5515 in Eckville, or Betty Larsen at 644-3779 in Standard.

CANOLA COUNCIL CONVENTION IN WINNIPEG MARCH 23-25

The Canola Council of Canada will hold its 25th anniversary convention next month in Winnipeg. Billed as an industry celebration, the convention runs March 23 through 25. Economics, marketing and breeding are among the topics on the convention agenda. As well, delegates will tour the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange, Canadian International Grains Institute, Canadian Grain Commission, University of Manitoba's plant sciences and ICI Seeds Canada. For more information, contact the Canola Council of Canada in Winnipeg at (204)982-2100.

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

March 2, 1992

New sweetener has processing potential

The processing potential of a newly approved sweetener may be its most valuable use says an Alberta Agriculture product development specialist.

"Sucralose meets the consumer expectation criteria of low calorie and 'natural quality', plus has a benefit no other currently available low calorie sweetener has—it should be useable in cooking and baking," says Lorea Ladner of Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc.

"From a food technologist standpoint, sucralose is exciting because it's stable under processing conditions of high temperatures and high acid," she adds.

Some of the possible product applications are the same as other sugar alternatives such as aspartame in beverages. Sucralose could also be used in ketchups, salad dressings, jams and jellies, canned fruits and vegetables, ice cream, breakfast cereals, baking mixes, ready to bake doughs, sweetened pastries and pudding/pie fillers.

Ladner says she sees applications for the sweetener in the dietetic field including foods for diabetics.

"Because sucralose was so recently given approval in Canada, we won't see products with sucralose in the near term. The applied research for product development will take some time. The biggest challenge, as always, will be consumer acceptability," she says.

Sucralose is made from sucrose, or what is commonly called sugar. While very similar to sugar's taste and physical form, sucralose has no calories and is 600 times sweeter than sugar. This offers a tremendous calorie saving. For example, a fruit flavored drink's calories could be reduced by 98 per cent, a jelly by 50 per cent, or a fruit pie by about 37 per cent.

Ladner notes because so little sucralose is needed in comparison with sugar to make a product sweet, some bulking agent is required in baked goods to maintain volume. That wouldn't necessarily mean more calories she adds. "Combined with fat replacements, a final product could be very light in terms of both sugar and fats."

Fifteen years were spent in development and extensive testing of sucralose, first discovered in Britain in 1976. It is non-toxic, non-carcinogenic and inherently biodegradable in the environment. Sucralose will be distributed in Canada under the trade name "Splenda".

For more information about the industrial uses of sucralose, contact Ladner at the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc at 986-4793.

Contact: Lorea Ladner
986-4793

MAR 1992

Calgary quilter "ties" to provincial title

An imaginative use of old ties won Calgary quilter Jean Gray the title of 1991's best Alberta quilter.

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This Week

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Gray received a $900 prize for her "Crazy friends" quilt in the fifth annual Alberta quilting competition sponsored in 1991 by the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies' (AAAS) and Alberta Agriculture.

The panel of three judges—Anne Seversen, Wilma Davison and Sandy Bowhay—also named second and third places winners, plus in a first for the competition gave two honorable mentions says Eve Cockle of the AAAS.

Audrey Wiedrick of Westlock, who has previously been a competition finalist, received the second place $300 award for her "Glacier roses" quilt. The judges described her quilt as creating "strong textural and visual impact". The $200 third place cheque went to "Basket of scraps" quilted by Shirley Mills of Red Deer.

The honorable mentions went to Rina Motycka of Raymond and Sharon Harder of Sherwood Park. Judges described Motycka's "Give and take" quilt as "thoughtful and stimulating color risks", and Harder's "Calendar year sampler" as an "effective integration of background piecework and applique".

All 11 of the competition quilts were displayed at West Edmonton Mall from February 14 through 16. The prize winners were announced at the annual AAAS awards banquet on February 15.

While the continuation of the competition had been in doubt, Cockle says the provincial competition will likely continue. "All the sponsorship details are currently being worked out. It may not run officially in 1992, but should return in 1993," she says.

The competition ran under the banner of the Canada Packers Alberta Quilt Competition Finals for its first four years. When Canada Packers was sold, the competition no longer had a sponsor. The AAAS and Alberta Agriculture stepped in as sponsors for the fifth competition.

Contact: *Eve Cockle*
427-2174

Editor's Note

The following three articles are in support of national nutrition month. The March awareness month, spearheaded by the Canadian Dietetic Association, this year is focusing on nutrition myths.

Overcoming the good food-bad food complex

Consumers tend to classify foods as "good" or "bad" and that's not the best strategy for healthy eating says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Diets, not individual foods, are what you can label healthy or unhealthy. The tendency to avoid 'bad' foods and eat 'good' foods takes people away from the principles of healthy eating—variety, moderation and balance," says Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutrition specialist.

Canada's Guidelines for Healthy Eating, updated in 1991, embody those principles. These nutrition recommendations provide Canadians a dietary guide to supply them with essential nutrition, while reducing the risk of chronic diseases.

Whitmore stresses the relationship between health and disease is complex, too complex, to be broken down into "good" and "bad" foods. "Unfortunately consumers are constantly bombarded with bits and pieces of information about the relationship of diet and chronic disease. But they don't get the background: that chronic and degenerative disease affect a small proportion of our population; that genetics and other factors play a key role in susceptibility; and, that there's a difference between cutting down the risk of illness and complete prevention."

Nor, she adds, can diet be given the sole responsibility for health problems. "Too often diet has been the easy target, but we all need to remember diet is only one factor in our total lifestyle."

The first of the five guidelines is "enjoy a variety of foods". "This is an important message to consumers who have been trapped in food myths such as 'you'd be healthier if you cut out red meat', or 'cholesterol-free foods are a healthier choice'," says Whitmore.

"The truth is that those kinds of generalizations do more harm than good by steering people away from essential nutrient sources, such as red meat and dairy products, and in people choosing foods solely because they have little or no fat but don't look at their nutritional value. So, the variety reinforces eating a wide range of foods in order to obtain the best nutrients possible."

The second guideline suggests emphasizing cereals, breads, other grain products, vegetables and fruits. "This also flies in the face of another common food myth that bread and pasta are fattening," Whitmore adds. "Balance, again, is the key. If all you eat is bread, without the other food groups, then you could be overweight. But the carbohydrates in bread and pasta are a good source of nutritional 'fuel', provide bulk in the diet and contribute to a feeling of satiety."

Choosing lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat is the third guideline. Added fats, from cooking preparation methods to excess salad dressing, have been singled out as major contributor to the fat content of our diets. Better choices and less of those "extras" can make a difference in the total fats people eat.

The fourth guideline advises Canadians to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight through regular physical activity and healthy eating. The final guideline recommends limiting salt, alcohol and caffeine consumption.

March is national nutrition month in Canada. The national campaign theme is challenging nutrition myths.

Contact: *Aileen Whitmore*
427-2412

Unmasking food safety myths

When surveyed most Canadians said they either worried little (47 per cent), or not all (28 per cent) about food safety, but a full 25 per cent of those surveyed worried a great deal about food safety.

The recent Consumers' Association of Canada and Agriculture Canada surveys also found most attitudes about food safety don't vary among different groups of people. People who prepared food more, people with more education and older people don't have very different attitudes from those who prepare food less, have less education or are younger.

"Unfortunately people's worries are intensified by misplaced fears, or what have become common food safety myths," says Aileen Whitmore, Alberta Agriculture provincial foods and nutrition specialist.

One of the ways Alberta Agriculture is unmasking these myths is by incorporating food safety messages into material for Alberta classrooms through the Ag in the Classroom program and Explore Nutritious Alberta.

"Taking agriculture into Alberta classrooms goes beyond basic understanding of our province's fundamental industry. It also puts students in touch with food safety and nutrition concerns that have key links to the agricultural industry," she says.

The Ag in the Classroom program deals with five specific food safety myths. The information points out, for example, that governments, not manufacturers have the major responsibility for food safety. Governments set health, safety and quality regulations that producers, processors and retailers must follow. Monitoring and inspection are also part of the process.

"One of the most important things that's pointed out to the students is there is no such thing as absolute safety, life just doesn't come with guarantees. Instead we have to put risks into perspective," Whitmore says.

The classroom material quotes a 16th century Swiss physician who said "dose makes the poison". For example, a single dose of 10 g of caffeine could kill an adult, but that small amount of caffeine is equivalent to 75 cups of black coffee drunk at a single sitting. Or, Vitamin A, is an essential nutrient, but a man has died from taking too much Vitamin A.

As well, the ranking of food safety hazards are examined. In the recent national surveys, Canadians said they felt more threatened by food hazards with long-term risks, than short-term problems such as stomach upsets or allergies.

The long-term risk Canadians felt most strongly about was pesticides. Experts, however, identify microbiological pathogens (food borne bacteria) as the number one potential food safety hazard notes Whitmore. "People underestimate how often bacterial food poisoning occurs, often thinking their upset stomach, diarrhea or vomiting is from stomach flu."

Some health experts believe for every reported case of food poisoning, 10 to 100 cases aren't reported. Health and Welfare Canada estimates there are two million cases of food poisoning in this country every year. But, in the recent surveys most Canadians believed they'd never had food poisoning. And, more than two-thirds of the people who thought they had food poisoning, blamed their food poisoning on food eaten outside their home.

"This is a false assumption. Your kitchen may be the weakest link in the food safety chain," says Whitmore. "We need to be more careful in how we prepare and store our food."

As well, almost half of those surveyed thought they could tell if food was "bad" but looking at or smelling it. However, this is misplaced confidence since many food poisoning bacteria don't cause changes in either appearance, smell or taste of the food they infect.

For more information about the Ag in the Classroom program, contact the agricultural education branch in Edmonton at 427-2403, or about Explore Nutritious Alberta, call Whitmore in Edmonton at 427-2412.

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

What in the name of natural

Organic, biological and ecological refer to a wide range of production methods, not that that food is more "natural" says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Calling or labelling food as 'natural' is unnecessarily confusing for consumers—all food is natural," says Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutrition specialist. "Adding to the confusion is that definitions of some of the other labels such as organic are still being clarified by producers and government regulators.

"What consumers must keep foremost in their minds is that food produced by any system must satisfy the same government safety standards," she adds. "There isn't evidence food produced by any particular production system is healthier. Some people have the mistaken belief carcinogens in food are a result of inappropriate processing or growing practices."

In fact, all plants and some animals produce their own, natural pesticides to protect themselves from fungus attack, insects and predators. Scientists have isolated tens of thousands of these chemicals such as allyl-isthiocyanate, a cancer-causing agent, found in cabbage.

Whitmore adds federal departments that administer food regulation have better integrated their responsibilities and increased sampling. The compliance rate for samples tested

Cont'd on page 4

for chemical residues is greater than 99 per cent. Sampling includes both domestic and imported foods.

Many practices promoted as "organic" are already used by most modern farmers. These include crop rotation, interplanting different crops in the same field and other techniques to minimize the need for pesticides. The main difference is that "organic" farmers avoid using synthetic chemicals in growing and harvesting their crops.

Some organic farmers use "natural" pesticides made from plant material. Whitmore notes it's misleading to assume these products are safer than other manufactured pesticides. "For example, rotenone from rhododendrons, is a so-called natural pesticide, but it's still classified as 'moderately to very toxic' by Agriculture Canada, is regulated and must be used with care."

Organic and traditional farmers are also trying biological pest controls. Like the synthetic pesticides, these biological controls must also undergo rigorous testing for safety, effectiveness and environmental impact. While many biological controls are currently being tested, only a few are available.

"This means, for now, only a limited amount of food can be produced using only 'biological' or 'organic' methods. As well, crop yields are substantially reduced, so consumers will pay higher prices for these products," she says.

"Keeping consumer prices lower is why most farmers will continue to use a combination of cultivation techniques with biological, mechanical and chemical controls," Whitmore adds.

While some people may be willing to pay more for organically grown foods, they can't expect greater nutritional value or better flavor she says. "The nutritional profile of a tomato, carrot or apple is the same whether grown with or without the benefits of pesticides and fertilizer."

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

Agri-News briefs

1st Circumpolar Agricultural Conference calls for papers

Paper abstracts for possible presentation at the first Circumpolar Agricultural Conference will be accepted until April 15. The conference is slated for Whitehorse September 28 through October 2. The conference theme is "sustainable agriculture in a circumpolar environment". Organizers are seeking papers related to research, production, policy development and market development in topics such as the role of soils in the global carbon budget, crop rotations suited to cold regions, conservation policy and unique marketing techniques. Presentations will be selected on the basis of a 250-word abstract. Two copies should be sent to David Beckman, director of agriculture, Yukon Territorial Government, Room 103, 302 Steele Street, Whitehorse, Yukon, Y1A 2C5, or call (403) 668-7663. Abstracts can be faxed to (403) 633-3067.

Agricultural Computing conference April 1-3 in Winnipeg

The Canadian Association for Agricultural Computing will hold its 1992 Agricultural Management Systems, Directions and Visions conference April 1 through 3 in Winnipeg. The keynote session will look at making the connection between technology, education and financing to increase markets. Other sessions will examine distance education tools and techniques, development software applications, marketing on a shoestring, finding a niche and bridging the distance with electronic bulletin boards. The registration deadline is March 18. For more information, contact Bonnie Luterbach (204) 474-8002 or Ralph Pieper (204) 945-2299 in Winnipeg.

Forage crop reference series available

A new series of four reference books on forage crops in Aspen Parklands of Western Canada is now available. Production (order number 029901), Pasturing (030001), Harvesting (030101) and Feeding Forage Crops (030201) are the titles in the series. Originally published in 1974 and considered a standard reference, the series has been expanded and updated. Included are new varieties, companion crops, soil management, weed and disease control, crop and animal nutrition, harvesting systems, feeding livestock and economics. Producers with problems such as spring flooding, soil erosion, a short growing season and management of annual crops would find the series helpful.

Cont'd on page 5

Each 80-page book in the series is $15.95. The series is available through the Canada Communication Group, Publishing, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0S9 or by calling (819) 956-4800.

First effects of Plant Breeders' rights felt

As many as 12 crop species will soon be protected through the Plant Breeders' Rights Act passed by the federal Parliament in 1990 says Don Ostergard, first vice-president of the Canadian Seed Growers' Association and long-time advocate of giving plant breeders legal protection from genetic pirates. The Act gives breeders "copyright" protection for a specific time and establishes a royalty system to reward new variety development. In the past royalty collection was protected by cumbersome contractual agreements that were difficult to police. "It will be several years before legislation will cover all species. We're not just talking about wheat, oats and barley. There are more than 50 grass species, as well as vegetable and nursery crops and ornamental plants," says Ostergard who is his association's representative on Agriculture Canada's Plant Breeders' Rights Advisory Committee. While critics said the legislation would be the downfall of public research, Ostergard says that hasn't happened. Instead, universities, some provincial agricultural departments and Agriculture Canada have found it easier to collect royalties on the crops they develop. "We are seeing new partnerships developed between public bodies and private companies," he adds. Ostergard says he hopes the Act will strengthen the Canadian plant breeding industry and open the nation to varieties not previously marketed here because foreign breeders lacked protection. For more information, contact Ostergard in Drumheller at 823-9326 or 823-9183.

Coming agricultural events

Managing Agriculture for Profit
The Lodge at Kananaskis
Kananaskis Village . . . . .March 1-4
Trish Pannell - 556-4240 - Olds

Calgary Bull Sale
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . .March 1-3
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Alberta Safflow Growers Association annual meeting
Agriculture Centre
Lethbridge . . . . .March 3
Beata Daniel - 381-5127 - Lethbridge

Federated Co-operatives Limited 63rd annual meeting
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan . . . . .March 3-5
Al Robinson - (306) 244-3227 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

AgExpo and North American Seed Fair
Lethbridge and district exhibition
Lethbridge . . . . .March 4-7
Paulette Reid - 328-4491 - Lethbridge

Canadian Horticultural Council
Westin Hotel
Ottawa, Ontario . . . . March 7-11
Ronna Reddick - (613) 226-4187 - Ottawa, Ontario

Horse judging clinics
Olds College
Western classes . . . . .March 7
English classes . . . . March 14
Bob Coleman - 427-6361 - Edmonton; Jim Freeman - 556-8367 - Olds

Agriculture Week
Alberta . . . . March 8-14
Bard Haddrell - 427-2127 - Edmonton

10th Western Canadian Dairy Seminar
Black Knight Inn
Red Deer . . . . March 10-13
John Kennelly - 492-2133 - Edmonton

Peace Country Classic Agri-Show
Evergreen Park
Grande Prairie . . . . March 12-14
John Fraser - 532-3279 - Grande Prairie

Alberta Horticultural Association annual meeting
Olds . . . . March 13-15
John McKechnie - 556-4668 (days) - 556-6663 (evenings) - Olds

The Little Royal—Lakeland College open house
Vermilion campus, Lakeland College
Vermilion . . . . March 20-22
Cathi Bishop - 853-8528 - Vermilion

Fruit Growers Society of Alberta annual meeting
Northlands Agricom
Edmonton . . . . .March 21
Len Pearson - 224-3011 - Bowden

Red Angus Breeders of Canada—Bull test sales
Pool Livestock Centre Medicine Hat March 21
Olds Cow Palace . . . . .March 28
Don Conway - 746-5515 - Eckville; Betty Larsen - 644-3779 - Standard

25th anniversary Canola Council of Canada: An industry's celebration
Winnipeg, Manitoba . . . . March 23-25
Canola Council of Canada - (209) 944-9494 - Winnipeg, Manitoba

Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) annual meeting
Youngstown Community Hall
Youngstown . . . . .March 24
Dianne Westerlund - 664-3777 - Oyen

Edmonton Northlands Farm and Ranch Show/9th annual Pedigreed Seed Show
Northlands AgriCom
Edmonton . . . . March 24-27
Leroy Emerson - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Groundwater and soil remediation 2nd annual symposium
Hotel Vancouver
Vancouver, British Columbia . . . . March 25-26
Elizabeth Wamsteeker - 276-7881 - Calgary

Lakeland College Bull test sale
Vermilion . . . . .March 28
John Barr - 853-8595 - Vermilion

International Sulphur Markets-Today and Tommorrow
Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City Hotel
Washington, D.C., U.S.A. . . . . April 1-3
The Sulphur Institute ! (202) 331-9660 - Washington, D.C.

Spring Dairy Classic and Aggie Days
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . April 1-5
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Agricultural Management Systems Directions and Visions
Delta Winnipeg
Winnipeg, Manitoba . . . . April 1-3
Bonnie Luterbach - (204) 474-8002 or
Ralph Pieper - (204) 945-2299 - Winnipeg, Manitoba

National Soil Conservation Week
. . . . April 13-19
Barb Shackel - 422-4385 - Edmonton

International symposium on non-conventional egg uses and newly emerging processing technologies
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff . . . . April 22-25
Sheila - 492-3029 - Edmonton

Food processing automation conference
Lexington, Kentucky . . . . May 4-6
Fred Payne - (606) 257-3000 - Lexington, Kentucky

Dressage Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . May 9
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Feeders' Day 1992: "Dairy day"
Dairy research unit, University of Alberta farm
Edmonton . . . . May 28
John Kennelly - 492-2133 - Edmonton

Calgary Arabian Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . May 29-31
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Canadian Water Resources Association 45th annual conference: "Resolving conflicts and uncertainty in water management"
Kingston, Ontario . . . . June 3-5
CWRA - (613) 546-4228 - Glenburnie, Ontario

Alberta Dairy Congress (6th annual)
Blackgold Centre
Leduc . . . . June 4-6
Iris Yanish - 986-8108 - Leduc

4-H on Parade
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . June 5-7
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Alberta Pork Congress
Westerner Exposition
Red Deer . . . . June 9-11
Pat Kennedy - 340-5307 - Red Deer

Beef Congress
Westerner Exposition
Red Deer . . . . June 16-18
Pat Kennedy - 347-4491 - Red Deer

Western Canadian Farm Progress Show
Exhibition Park
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . June 17-19
Regina Exhibition Association - (306) 781-9200 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Appli-Tech'92: "Agricultural chemical application technology for the '90s"
Western Canada Farm Progress Show
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . June 17-19
Bruce Hobin - (306) 966-5551 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Alberta Cowboy Poetry Association '92 Gathering
Pincher Creek Community Hall
Pincher Creek . . . . June 19-21
Anne Stevick - 627-4733 - Pincher Creek; Bev Barr - 628-2115 - Pincher Creek

Canadian Agricultural Extension Council annual meeting
Fredericton, New Brunswick . . . . June 21-23
John Tackaberry - 427-2409 - Edmonton

Calgary Stampede
Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Park
Calgary . . . . July 3-12
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Agricultural Institute of Canada annual conference: "The family farm in the 21st century"
University of Brandon
Brandon, Manitoba . . . . July 5-9
Red Forbes - (204) 727-9702 - Brandon, Manitoba

1992 Conference of Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture
Halifax, Nova Scotia . . . . July 6-8
Kevin Grant - (902) 424-5719 - Halifax, Nova Scotia

Roots of Plant Nutrition conference
Chancellor Hotel and Convention Centre
Champaign, Illinois . . . . July 8-10
Dr. Terry Roberts - 345-4460 - Coaldale

Klondike Days
Edmonton Northlands
Edmonton . . . . July 16-25
Leroy Emerson - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Prairie-Parkland Chapter, Society for Range Management annual meeting
Board room, Alsask Retirement Villa
Alsask, Saskatchewan . . . . July 23
Daryl Tumbach - (306) 662-2464 - Maple Creek, Saskatchewan

First Canadian Master Gardeners conference
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan . . . . July 26-29
Bruce Hobin - (306) 966-5551 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Alberta 4-H 75th anniversary Showcase'92
Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Park
Calgary . . . . July 30 - August 2
Mahlon Weir - 427-2541 - Edmonton; Gail Companion - 652-4023 - High River

International Symposium on Agricultural Techniques in Cold Regions II (ISAAC II)
University of Alberta
Edmonton . . . . August 4-7
David Chanasyk - 492-3242 - Edmonton

Environmental Soil Science conference
Edmonton . . . . August 8-15
Yash Kalra - 435-7210 - Edmonton; Bill McGill - 492-5397 - Edmonton

Jackpot Mark of Excellence Hereford Show
Millet . . . . August 9
Tom Jacobsen - 387-4735 - Millet; Clarence Potter - 967-2138 - Onoway

3rd World Sheep and Wool Congress
Plaza Hotel
Buenos Aires, Argentina . . . . August 9-16
Norma Dunn - 289-7337 - Calgary; Peggy Newman - 652-7563 - Blackie

Cattle Penning Finals
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . .September 12-13
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

National Quarter Horse Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . .September 23-27
Barb McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

1st Circumpolar Agricultural Conference: Sustainable Agriculture in a circumpolar environment
Whitehorse, Yukon . . . . September 28 - October 2
Rachael Lewis - (403) 668-7663 - Whitehorse, Yukon

Cutting Horse Futurity
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . October 15-17
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Sale
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . October 24
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

4th National Ag in the Classroom conference
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton . . . . October 24-27
REDA office - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Farmfair'92
Edmonton Northlands Agricom
Edmonton . . . . November 6-14
Leroy Emerson - 471-7210 - Edmonton

"Erosion: causes to cures" short course and conference
Ramada Renaissance
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . November 2-4
Ray Pentland - (306) 949-8288 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Alberta Horticultural Congress and trade show
Coast Terrace Inn/Convention Inn South
Edmonton . . . . November 5-7
Simone Demers Collins - 427-7366 - Edmonton

Alberta Market Gardeners Association annual meeting
Edmonton . . . . November 6
Tam Volk - 921-2272 - Bon Accord

Poultry and Rabbit Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . November 27-19
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Agribition
Exhibition Park
Regina, Sasakatchewan . . . . November 28 - December 4
Regina Exhibition Association - (306) 781-9200 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association annual meeting and trade show
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff . . . . December 2-5
Nigel Bowles - 489-1991 - Edmonton

Note: Alberta communities host a number of local fairs. Because there are so many, they are not listed in the "Coming Agricultural Events" list. A list of agricultural society fairs was compiled by the community and rural services branch and is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Coming agricultural events

- Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **June, July, August or later in 1992?** Are there any events omitted in the attached list?

- Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name, city** or **town**, and **phone number** of a contact person for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by May 21, 1992 to:

Agri-News Editor
Print Media Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed June 1, 1992)

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

March 9, 1992

Good feedgrain marketing opportunities in 1992-93

Predicted lower U.S. barley and oat acreage in 1992 should increase export opportunities for Canadian feedgrains says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

The U.S. Feedgrains Council is forecasting U.S. barley acreage to go down by 15 per cent in 1992 to 7.5 million acres. "Declines in U.S. barley production would be positive for Alberta farmers in two important aspects," says Charlie Pearson. "First, lower U.S. production will mean tighter supplies and a reduced ability to compete on the export market. Using the export enhancement program to subsidize barley export prices would, therefore, likely stop."

As well, he says, the production reduction will increase U.S. import demand. U.S. maltsters and Pacific northwest cattle feedlots are both likely buyers of Canadian barley.U.S. oat acreage is also predicted to remain at historically low levels in 1992 he adds, as U.S. farm programs continue to favor other cropping alternatives.

"Alberta farm managers are encouraged to maintain acres seeded to these crops at traditional levels based on effective crop rotations and to use management practices that will increase their chance of obtaining top grades, particularly for malt barley and high quality oats," says Pearson.

Delivery patterns and weather will be the major factors in the direction of Alberta barley prices during the reminder of 1992 he notes. "Assuming favorable weather in both the Prairies and the U.S. Midwest, southern Alberta barley prices are likely to remain in the current trading range of $75 to $90 per tonne." Pearson's outlook for northern prices is a likely range between $65 and $75 per tonne.

International barley prices remain at about $140 per tonne to premium markets such as Japan and $110 per tonne to markets identified by U.S. and European export subsidies.

Pearson says if barley exports are less than 4 million tonnes, combined adjustment/final payments for feed barley delivered to the Canadian Wheat Board should be in the $20 to $25 per tonne range. This would result in Alberta based total elevator payments of about $75 per tonne.

In the oat market, improvements in U.S. oat prices have been reflected directly in Alberta price increases. Elevator bids for feed oats were over $95 per tonne at the end of February. "Tight North American oat supplies will hold prices at current levels during the spring," Pearson says. "Expectations for high prices, however, would have to be backed up by a weather problem in a major oat growing region."

Contact: *Charlie Pearson*
427-5386

MAR 2 4 1992

This Week

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Hog prices post steady improvement with Canadian dollar drop

A lower Canadian dollar improved both hog prices through February and the spring price outlook says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Like cattle prices, Alberta slaughter hog prices in February benefitted from two unrelated trends—a decrease in the Canada/U.S. exchange rate and an increase in U.S. cash markets," says Ron Gietz.

Alberta Index 100 hog prices posted steady improvements and reached the $1.20/kg level by mid-February. Gietz is predicting the monthly average Alberta producer payment price for Index 100 hogs will dip to $1.15 through March, but rise to $1.20 in April and $1.25 in May.

"These prices are still less than for the same time last year," he notes. In 1991 the monthly average price was $1.44/kg in March, $1.43 in April and $1.53 in May.

In other market news, both slaughter and live hog exports to the U.S. are up nationally. "This increase is somewhat surprising considering the higher countervailing duties on live hog exports that went into effect in 1991," Gietz says.

In Western Canada, live exports did drop sharply in the fourth quarter, but in Ontario the pace of live exports increased. Gietz says live exports to the U.S. do have the potential to increase whenever the latest administrative review of the countervailing duty is announced by the U.S. Commerce Department. "Since this review will result in lower duties, American authorities are likely to delay its release," he adds.

Contact: *Ron Gietz*
427-5376

Weaker Canadian dollar improves early '92 cattle market

Both fed and feeder cattle prices strengthened in February on the back of a weaker Canadian dollar says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Last fall, trends in both the U.S. market and exchange rates worked to the disadvantage of Alberta cattle feeders," says Ron Gietz. "This winter, both the U.S. market and the Canada/U.S. dollar exchange rate have been trending to the advantage of Alberta producers."

Prices for Alberta slaughter steers and heifers managed to top $80 per hundredweight by early February. Feeder cattle prices also strengthened in February, probably because of the steady increases in the fed cattle market Gietz adds.

But Gietz says he believes the fed cattle price rally is near its end. "By the third week in February the two positive trends seemed to have run out of steam. The Bank of Canada interest rate had consecutive increases and the U.S. rally ran into the roadblock of slow retail interest and pressured packer margins."

However, he adds, continuing tight supplies of fed cattle into the spring months should prevent any major slide in U.S. prices. Locally, tight supplies should also help the Alberta market until April when a large run of fed calves is anticipated. Gietz's projections for the monthly average slaughter steer price in Alberta are for $83/cwt. in March, $82/cwt. in April and $79/cwt. in May.

Gietz also notes the market for good grass cattle should remain strong through the spring, assuming good moisture conditions in pastures. "Even with continued active buyer interest, prices for light feeders are likely to average $5 to $10/cwt. below year-ago levels. In a typical seasonal pattern, heavy feeder cattle prices are expected to slip slightly in March and April," he says.

Contact: *Ron Gietz*
427-5376

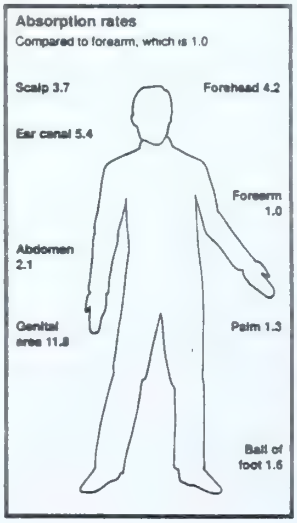
Wear the "right stuff" when using pesticides

Wearing protective clothing is a farmer's main defense from exposure to pesticides says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Being protected means more than just wearing any hat or gloves to prevent spills, spray or dust from getting on your skin," says Bertha Eggertson, provincial clothing and textiles specialist who has studied farmer attitudes about protective clothing.

"Fabric caps absorb pesticides and are a continuing source of contamination every time the cap is worn. So are leather or fabric gloves. We recommend a hard hat and unlined nitrile gloves.

"We stress protecting these particular areas of the body because they have a high likelihood of exposure or a high absorption rate. Hands receive the largest exposure, so protecting your hands really reduces your body's total exposure," she says. Unlined nitrile gloves are recommended for both the pesticide user and anyone who handles pesticide-soiled clothing.



Different areas of the body absorb pesticides through the skin at different rates. "So extra protection in the most vulnerable areas such as the scalp, forehead and genital area is very critical," says Eggertson.

"For example, the genital area has an almost 12 times higher absorption rate than the forearm. For that reason, some farmers have chosen to wear impermeable aprons when handling and mixing

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concentrated pesticides to increase their protection in that area."

And while more farmers are wearing appropriate protective clothing and fewer are suffering from pesticide exposure, their personal hygiene is also part of the safety equation.

"This means not eating, drinking, smoking or going to the bathroom without washing your hands," she says. "Werecommend a shower immediately after handling pesticides for the day, or a pesticide spill."

Eggertson notes farmers might not realize they've been effected by a pesticide because symptoms can be confused with the flu. Symptoms include headache, drowsiness, weakness, dizziness and nausea. In some cases, reddened skin, blisters, swelling, breathing problems, heavy perspiration and unconsciousness may be observed.

"If you suspect your skin has absorbed some pesticide, flush the area with large amounts of water, wash the area with soap and water, and seek medical assistance if necessary," she says.

Water should be readily available in the field for washing and rinsing. A special first aid kit in a convenient location is also recommended.

To minimize exposure, farmers are advised to wear correct protective clothing and suitable safety equipment, and to wash clothing and equipment after each use. Basic protection includes coveralls, rubber or neoprene boots, a hard hat and unlined nitrile gloves. Farmers shouldn't wear: baseball caps; leather or cloth gloves, shoes or boots; leather belts and watchbands; natural rubber or plastic gloves; and, contact lenses. All can absorb pesticides and be a continual source of contamination.

Protective clothing as well as pesticide application information are discussed in a new Alberta Agriculture Farmer Pesticide Certification Program. For more information about that program, or for relevant publications, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Bertha Eggertson
427-2412

Sugar beet tripartite payments for 1990 approved

The National Tripartite Sugar Beet Stabilization Committee recently approved payments of nearly $1.25 million for the 1990 crop.

The payment comes after completion of 1990 sugar crop sales and the committee finalizing market returns and the premium level. The premium for 1990 is $1.14 per standard tonne.

"An initial premium of one dollar per field tonne was set in 1990, and Alberta producers have already contributed 87 cents per standard tonne to the national tripartite plan," says Lloyd Andruchow, head of the special crops branch.

Alberta sugar beet tripartite plan participants will receive $1.22 per standard tonne minus a premium adjustment of 27 cents per standard tonne for a net of 95 cents per tonne he adds. The final payment is based on the difference between the support price of $36.23 per standard tonne and the national average market return of $35.01 per standard tonne.

"With Alberta's national share of sugar production at 62.5 per cent in 1990, the Alberta payments will total nearly $783,000," Andruchow notes. All Alberta sugar beet producers participate in the national tripartite plan.

Sugar beets are harvested on a field tonne basis and then converted to standard tonnes based on sugar extraction. A standard tonne of sugar beets represents the amount of sugar beets required to produce 125 kilograms of sugar. The average field tonne of sugar beets harvested in 1990 in Alberta produced about 144.5 kg of sugar. The Manitoba average was 146.6 kg.

Producers, along with the provincial and federal governments, contribute equally to the national sugar beet stabilization fund.

Contact: Lloyd Andruchow
422-5672

Don't start bedding plants too soon

Colorful seed catalogues are a reminder the time has come to prepare for the 1992 garden season.

"It's not too early to order seeds or to check out what's offered at local seed stores, greenhouses or garden centres," says Pam North, horticulturist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre.

"But," she adds, "It could be too early to start your bedding plants from seed. Having the seeds on hand is a temptation for enthusiastic gardeners, but by starting too early you can end up with weak and spindly plants that won't transplant well or be as attractive."

She advises checking the Alberta Horticultural Guide for annual flowers' seeding dates. Guides are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices and the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre, R.R. 6, Edmonton, Alberta, T5B 4K3.

Growing your own bedding plants starts with seeding. Start with flats or containers with good drainage. Common disposable household items such as yogurt containers and egg or milk cartons can be recycled as flats she suggests. "But", she adds, "remember to make drainage holes in the bottom."

A soil-based or soilless mix can be used. "Buy a mix, or mix your own at home," says the Alberta Agriculture horticulturist. "A good all-purpose mix is one part pasteurized loam, one part peat moss and one part perlite or vermiculite."

Fill containers with the growing media and tamp down lightly. The soil surface should be even. Leave a half-inch of space at the top of the container. Spread seeds evenly over the soil surface or in rows. Don't seed too heavily because plants are more likely to be spindly if they're crowded.

Cover seeds to a depth twice their diameter. For example, a

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quarter-inch sized seed should be covered with a half inch of vermiculite or moist growing media. After covering the seeds, water with a fine mist or soak the flats in a basin of water until the soil is moist.Bedding plants should be grown in high light conditions notes North. Windows with a southern or eastern exposure are

preferable. If growing the plants under artificial light, use one warm white and one cool white fluorescent tube.

Once the plants germinate they should be pricked out. "Pricking out means transferring seedlings to individual containers for maximum growth. This process should start when seedlings have their first set of 'true' leaves. This is their second set of leaves," she says. Lift plants and gently separate their root systems. Replant into individual containers such as peat pots or cell packs. Then, fertilize with a starter solution such as 10-52-10.

For more information about growing bedding plants, contact North at 422-1789.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Nominations open for provincial agricultural teacher recognition

For the first time in North America teachers who bring agriculture into their classroom will be honored as part of the 1992 national agriculture in the classroom conference.

Organizers are planning to recognize one outstanding teacher from each Canadian province at the fourth national conferenceOctober 24 through 27 in Edmonton. Award winning teachers will be introduced at the conference and will receive a variety of other recognition including a special award.

Nominees must be practising teachers notes Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program and a member of the selection committee.

"We're looking for teachers who have already made a considerable contribution to agricultural awareness through their classroom activities," she says. "We hope that this sort of provincial and national recognition will enhance the education and agriculture network with increased liaison and co-operation between the two communities both locally and nationally."

Nominations must be supported by the teacher's school administration and or peers, but the nominations may also come from the public. "We'll be sending nomination packages out into the community and expect nominations will also come from individuals, a 4-H club or a service organization," she says.

Nomination packages will be sent out to both the educational and agricultural communities to such groups as school superintendents and agricultural service boards. Alberta Agriculture district offices will also have nomination packages.

Gabert notes nominations must be post marked no later than May 15. Anyone interested in a nomination package should contact Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2402.

Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2402

Agri-News briefs

Baled hay imports to Japan boom in '91

Baled hay imports to Japan were 25 per cent higher in 1991 than for the previous year. "By October of 1991, baled hay imports had surpassed the 1990 total," says Al Dooley, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Total imports for 1991 were just over one million tonnes. The U.S. continues to have the lion's share of the Japanese market. Other processed forage products didn't fare as well in 1991. While Japan imported 276,000 tonnes of alfalfa pellets—virtually all of Canadian origin—this total was eight per cent below the 1990 total. Cubed alfalfa totals were up marginally over 1990. Currently processed forage markets are depressed and will be particularly weather sensitive in 1992. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Local canola prices supported

Slow farmer deliveries, higher domestic crush and export volumes, and declines in the Canadian dollar supported local canola prices in recent weeks. Elevator/crusher bids for canola were in the $230 to $240 range in late February, a $20 per tonne improvement from early winter levels.

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Charlie Pearson, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst, forecasts local canola prices to remain in the $220 to $240 per tonne range during the spring. Summer prices will depend on North American oilseed acreage and the weather. For more information, contact Pearson in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Lamb price peak at Easter

Stronger feeder and slaughter lamb prices are likely as the U.S. sheep flock continues to get smaller says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Price peaks should occur at Easter with slight price declines or a levelling off during the summer and fall," says Jo Ann Sandhu. She adds continued weakening of the Canadian dollar relative to the U.S. dollar should further improve lamb markets in Alberta, as well as increase the potential of lamb exports to the U.S. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Women in soil conservation seminar March 17

The Stanislaw Sandblasters Conservation Society is holding a "women in soil conservation" seminar March 17 in Vegreville. The guest speaker is Shirley McClellan, Alberta's associate agriculture minister and minister responsible for rural development. Among the seminar topics are: values, goals and issues; women as leaders and educators; and, resources available to women. The evening seminar begins at 7:30 at the Vegreville Legion. For more information, contact Alexis Machura in Vegreville at 632-5400.

Alberta Hort Association convention March 13-15 in Olds

The Alberta Horticultural Association will hold its 40th annual convention March 13 through 15 at Olds College. Among the conference topics are: new and unusual plants for the home garden; TransAlta Utilities' tree and shrub computer program; biological insect control; environmentally friendly lawns; native plants in the home garden; groundcovers for low-input gardening; and, composting. For more information, contact John McKechnie, conference co-ordinator, evenings or weekends at 556-6663, or weekdays at 556-4668.

Farm conservation planning video wins awards

An Alberta Agriculture video on farm conservation planning recently won four awards at two different festivals on the same weekend. The 13 minute production received the nod in the best motivational category and for best original music (non-dramatic) at the Alberta Film and Television Awards. As well, the Portland-based jury for the Ad Club of Alberta awards named it best video creative and best production. The awards were collected by Frame 30 Productions who the department contracted to produce the video. "A tip of the hat should go to Tom Goddard who 'starred' in the video and shepherded the crew around the province and liaised with everyone," says Ron Brown, head of Alberta Agriculture's broadcast media branch. Goddard is a soil conservation specialist in the conservation and development branch. "Farm Conservation Planning" (Agdex 516-7) is available for loan from all Alberta Agriculture district video libraries. The video version and a 16mm film are also available for loan by writing the Alberta Agriculture Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Write for free audio-visual catalogue

Demand for Alberta Agriculture's 1991-92 Audio-Visual Catalogue continues to be high. The publication lists call numbers, titles and descriptions of all audio-visual materials in the department's Edmonton film library. The catalogue also includes conditions for both Alberta and out-of-province borrowers. Copies of the catalogue are free of charge by writing the Broadcast Media Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Farm management training programs funded

Five private firms received funding from the Canada-Alberta Farm Management Training Initiative to train farmers in various areas of farm management. This funding is one aspect of the joint federal-provincial program. In total, the five companies received $270,000 for courses held in Alberta communities through to March 31, 1992. The five companies are: Agricultural Institute of Management, Calgary; Business Idea and Development Society, Olds; Kenagra Management Services, Edmonton; Mitcon Inc., Calgary; and, Muth and Associates, Lloydminster. Courses ranged through broad farm management to strategic management. For more information, contact Wilson Loree with Alberta Agriculture in Olds at 556-4240, or Les Usher with Agriculture Canada in Edmonton at 495-5528.

College hosts elementary school tours

As part of its Adopt-A-Classroom Project, Olds College students will have a unique opportunity to share their agricultural knowledge with elementary school students. Any Olds College

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student is eligible to take part in the Adopt-A-Classroom Project. Project co-ordinator Joan Fraser calls this part of the project an advanced communications course. Participating college students are forwarded questions to answer about agriculture from elementary students. The college students are also required to make suggestions about how to better incorporate agricultural information into classrooms of the future. As well, during Agriculture Week March 8 through 14, up to 250 elementary school students from central and southern Alberta will be hosted to special tours of Olds College. Nine college students will help guide the tours. For more information about the Adopt-A-Classroom Project or the special Agriculture Week tours, contact Joan Fraser, Olds College registrar, at 556-8323.

Regional swine seminars run March 17-20

Four swine seminars will be held in different locations across the province starting March 17. Each of the regional seminars will have an identical program featuring Jim Gowans, a Red Deer based nutritional consultant. Gowans will discuss using field peas and Condor barley in swine feeds. Alberta Agriculture swine specialists will tackle topics such as dry sow housing, feeding systems, marketing for maximum profit, running a gilt pool, water quality and using drip cooling in information and problem solving sessions. The day-long seminars will be in: Lethbridge, Sven Erickson's Restaurant, Tuesday, March 17; Red Deer, Red Deer Lodge, Wednesday, March 18; Ryley, Ryley Community Center, March 19; and, Westlock, Hazel Bluff Hall (five km west of Westlock on Highway 18), Friday, March 20. The $20 registration fee (plus GST) includes lunch. After March 12, the registration fee is $30. For more information, call your Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist, regional swine specialist, or the Alberta Pork Congress in Red Deer at 340-7603 or 340-5307.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

March 16, 1992

Seed testing certificate tool in seed choice

Producers who overlook a seed testing certificate when buying seed stock are missing an important instant analysis of what they're buying says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"As we continue to see an increase in the number of public and private crop varieties available, the task of selecting the best cultivar for you becomes more difficult. A seed testing certificate can help you make your choice, and it's a document you're entitled to for all your seed purchases," says Bill Witbeck, supervisor of seed technology with Alberta Agriculture's field crops branch. "A seed testing certificate is the best marketing tool a seed retailer has," he adds.

Seed testing certificates must be part of a seed label, or the seller must provide the same information at the time of sale or within a reasonable period—two to three days—after the sale. These regulations apply to both pedigreed and common seed.

The certificate, by regulation, provides: name and number of noxious weeds per unit weight; the total number of weed seeds per unit weight; the total number of seeds of other crops per unit weight; the per cent germination of a representative sample of the seed; and, the date the germination test was completed.

"If you're purchasing seed, and the retail outlet refuses to supply you with the analysis of that seed lot, you might want to buy your seed somewhere else," Witbeck says. "If you're buying seed from a regional outlet, give your retailer enough notice so the necessary information can be requested from the head office." He adds the retailer need only supply the information on the seed testing certificate and not necessarily the actual certificate.

Witbeck also advises farmers to place their seed orders early. "This allows the seed retailer to get you the certificate or the relevant information. It also provides you with an opportunity to shop around if you're not satisfied with the purity or germination of a particular stock."

March has been traditionally designated as "Good Seed Month" by the Canadian Seed Growers' Association. The association has used the early spring month to promote the advantages of certified seed during a time when farmers are making seeding decisions.

"Today's producers can't afford to take their number one input for granted, and the standards behind the certified seed tag have never been more important," says Rolland Brault, president of the national association

Contact: Bill Witbeck
782-4641

U.S. election will stall trade agreements

We shouldn't expect any significant breakthroughs in trade agreements, either international or North American, in the immediate future a University of Alberta economics professor told the recent Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP'92) conference

"It's extraordinarily unlikely any trade agreement will be presented prior to the American election," says Ted Chambers who adds a highly protectionist "America first" attitude is prevalent in the election campaign. He adds the U.S. administration will forestall

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AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

GATT until after November and says flatly, "there will be no North American Free Trade Agreement until after the U.S. election".

Recession, both in North America and abroad, is also playing a role in the delay in completing trade talks. A simplified reason is that it's easier to negotiate in an expansionary, buoyant economy than in a sluggish one. As well, some influential members of the European Community and Japan seem to be reluctant to commit to trade liberalization he says.

As far as a North American agreement goes, the biggest winner in the deal would be Mexico and that doesn't provide a negotiating incentive for the U.S. that expects "much smaller" benefits. One of the major stumbling blocks remaining in negotiations is a dispute settlement mechanism notes Chambers.

Canada's benefits from a North American free trade agreement would be "very modest" in the short term he says. One of Canada's major gains in such an agreement would be access of agricultural products into Mexico.

Chambers emphasized Canada's recovery from the current recession and a healthy, viable economy in the future go much deeper than trade agreements. Trade policy, he says, in a high income country doesn't stand alone, but is part of a triad with research and development and human resource training.

"There is no way to divorce trade policy from research and development on one hand, and labor market training on the other," he says. Canada, however, has a shortfall in both of these two other critical areas.

In the long run, dollars spent on research and development determine a country's ability to stay a high income country he says. But Canada has one of the lowest proportions of research and development spending among industrialized nations. About 1.3 per cent of Canada's total output is invested into research and development. In comparison, Sweden and Japan spend about 2.7 per cent.

For Chambers, a major concern is that the private sector is deficient in this vital spending area, particularly resource industries that spend only 40 per cent of the national average.

"Extensive training is necessary to successfully link trade policy to produce significant positive results in the economy," he adds. Canada is also falling short in labour training hampered by a large percentage of functionally illiterate who aren't able to cope with sophisticated technology and a high school drop out rate of 30 per cent. Nor does the tax system encourage on-the-job training and unemployment insurance focuses on income maintenance rather than re-training.

He adds the same type of labor marketing training problems exist in the United States.

Held at the Lodge at Kananaskis, MAP'92 was the 15th annual Alberta Agriculture farm management conference designed for farm couples. MAP is co-sponsored by the Rural Education Development Association (REDA) with additional private and public support.

Farm environmental audits may become standard

Environmental audits may become a routine part of farm practices in the near future a University of Calgary environmental science professor told the recent Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP'92) conference.

Dixon Thompson predicts banks will ask farmers to bring their environmental audit with them along with their financial statements. While banks and other financial institutions might routinely require these audits, Thompson also says tighter regulations and sound management practice are also good reasons for an environmental audit.

"You do environmental audits for somewhat the same reason as financial audits," says Thompson. Besides a matter of good housekeeping, a farm environmental audit would include compliance with federal and provincial laws as well as municipal by-laws. The audit would also check how the farm conformed to individual and industry standards.

From an initial audit, farmers could draft their own action plan and individual code of ethics. "The first audit in any industry is the most difficult because you need the whole history," he adds. This comprehensive, historical audit would include items such as past and current pesticide container disposal, fuel spills, energy use, soil erosion, marginal land and wildlife populations. In following years the audit would be less time consuming and serve as a check point for the farm's environmental status.

At the same time as individual farmers take the lead by writing down their own set of environmental ethics and standards for their operation, the entire industry must also take an active approach to environmental issues he says. Without taking action, the industry risks falling to a position where public confidence is lost.

Thompson also listed water pricing, land use and the industry's relationship to consumer and environmental groups as other environmental issues that will affect individual farmers and the whole industry. He described water pricing as "inevitable" and that marginal land use may be affected by trade agreements and climate change.

In dealing with environmental and consumer groups he advises the agriculture industry to know their "opposition" and find out who can be worked with to establish acceptable standards for both sides. Canada, so far, has a better record of co-operative methods—such as round tables—rather than what Thompson called a short-sighted preoccupation with using the courts in the United States.

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Niche markets found in consumer trends

Niche markets are where it's at if you're going to make it in the '90s was Donna Messer's message to the 1992 Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP'92) conference.

Messer, current director of food and agriculture for Illinois' Canadian office and a former president of the Canadian Speciality Food Association, told her farm audience they could find their niche by spotting a trend and filling it.

Lifestyle changes, consumer attitudes and consumer age and income are among the factors influencing food trends. Consumer education, for example, has developed into consumers looking for lower, lighter and leaner products with less sodium, fat, cholesterol and caffeine. Consumer desire for a wider variety of foods has fuelled growth in secondary vegetable consumption such as broccoli.

Messer identified some general consumer categories that entrepreneurs might want to reach. Traditionals are the 50 years and older segment of the population. Messer describes them as the most discriminating and most prepared-to-spend consumers. Boomers, the 25 to 50 year olds, make up about 35 per cent of the population. "They made salad a meal in itself," she says and adds their food habits reflect moderation. The afterboomers are the microwave generation. Barely taught to cook, she says, this group's credo is "if you can heat it, we can eat it".

These general categories, she adds, also have more specific targets: the single, over 55 year old woman who is typically a light eater; boomer families who eat fewer formal meals and like ethnic foods; and, one-parent families who want inexpensive, healthy and fast meals.

"Variety and innovation play a big role in being successful in niche markets," says Messer. While variety could range from non-traditional vegetables to taking advantages of yogurt's versatility, Messer predicts service-added products will lead the way in this decade.

Value-added was the buzz word from the 1960s through the 1980s, but she says "just-in-time" to cook service-added products will be the revolution of the 1990s. These products will have a minimum of packaging as consumers "don't want [environmentally] and don't want to pay for added packaging".

An example of service added products are washed, peeled or sliced vegetables. The niche marketer, for instance, would wash and bag lettuce. Freshness, ready-to-use or ready-to-cook (microwave or grill) will be key services offered to busy consumers.

Not only will the niche marketer have to spot trends and offer variety and innovation, but also extraordinary service. "Consumers will seek out the best combination of quality service and price—they won't buy just if it's local," Messer says. "Service will be key to many opportunities."

Messer also sees a niche for special indulgence products. "Regardless of the economy, people still need treats." But, she adds, while the niche exists, the product has to be the "best" and the marketer must beware consumer fickleness in this type of product.

Held at the Lodge at Kananaskis, MAP'92 was the 15th annual Alberta Agriculture farm management conference designed for farm couples. MAP is co-sponsored by the Rural Education Development Association (REDA) with additional private and public support.

New "normal" in farm machinery industry

Farm machinery prices aren't likely to go up with a globalized economy and increased competition says a Western Canadian manufacturer.

"I don't think there's room for them to go up," John Buhler told a farm machinery outlook session at the recent Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP'92) conference. "We have to learn to compete in a new economy," he adds. "We're living in a global economy and we can't stop it."

Buhler, a Manitoba short line equipment manufacturer, says he doesn't expect there to be much more shake up in an industry where the number of major manufacturers has tumbled with company mergers, realignments and failures.

The farm machinery industry underwent significant changes through the 1980s he notes. As farmers were caught between falling commodity prices and rising input costs, they bought less machinery. Between 1981 and 1991, for example, total tractor sales plummeted by 53 per cent. Farmers also have kept their equipment longer. Today three-quarters of Canadian harvesting equipment is more than six years old. Sixty per cent has been used for a decade or more. Buhler says lost sales meant the industry had to rationalize.

He adds manufacturers waiting for times to get back to normal are deceiving themselves. Says Buhler of the current situation, "These are normal".

His message was also of a strong short line manufacturing industry in Western Canada. Between 7,000 and 8,000 people are employed in this type of farm machinery production across the west. As well, short line sales were much more solid through 1981 to 1991. Although, he notes sales dropped to $772 million 1991 from 1990's $922 million.

Buhler also had a message about how to succeed for his farm management conference audience. He advises borrowing and investing wisely, knowing the competition, understanding government and managing with a gut feel.

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Cont'd on page 4

Golden opportunity for three Alberta 4-H leaders

Three Alberta volunteer 4-H leaders had a "golden opportunity" in their recent trip to a leaders conference in California.

Donna Kozak of Hardisty, Shirley Trimble of Sherwood Park and Doug Fox of Hillspring were selected as conference delegates based on their experience and dedication to the 4-H program says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist.

The Alberta leaders travelled to Irvine in Orange County, California for the March 8 through 11 Western Regional Leaders Forum. The theme of this year's conference was "4-H, a golden opportunity".

The forum annually attracts more than 500 volunteers leaders from across the western U.S. Alberta has sent delegates to the conference since 1975 notes Stark. "The Albertans are often the only Canadian group and while there aren't many in our group, we're usually visible through our enthusiasm for learning."

All forums are designed to enhance leaders' teamwork skills through the three "Cs" of communication, co-operation and commitment. Extension staff, volunteer leaders themselves and specialized professionals presented these concepts through a broad range of workshops. Program titles in 1992 included "If I could talk to a pig", "Multicultural understanding", "Kids 'r' us", "Change happens" and "Making 4-H a cultural experience".

"Our Alberta delegates had more than just a golden opportunity to enrich their own leadership and communication skills. They also had the opportunity to learn about the 4-H program in many American states, meet new people and share the Alberta 4-H experience," says Stark.

The conference trip is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture.

Contact:	*Marguerite Stark*	*Janice Taylor*
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Agri-News briefs

Contribute to DHE 50th anniversary

In May 1993 Alberta Agriculture's district home economists (DHEs) will celebrate their 50th anniversary, and a historical committee is looking for Albertans help in documenting the role DHEs have played in the life of rural families. Farm families, 4-H members and organizations are encouraged to submit a one page (250 word or less) article for a publication the committee is planning. "We hope the articles would be written in the context of how DHEs have assisted in improving rural families' quality of life," says Edith Zawadiuk. Pictures would also be appreciated. Contributions can be dropped off at local Alberta Agriculture offices, or mailed to Zawadiuk at Alberta Agriculture, Box 487, Two Hills, Alberta, T0B 4K0.

National holstein convention April 9-14 in Saskatoon

The Holstein Breeders of Saskatchewan will host the 109th National Holstein Convention April 9 through 14 in Saskatoon. The Canada Dairy Expo will be included as part of convention activities on April 9 through 11. Participants will have their choice of tours on April 13 including local agri-businesses, Holstein farms and the University of Saskatchewan. For more information, contact Sue Kuhl at (306)933-3366 or FAX (306)668-1814.

Kinsella ranch bull sale April 15

The University of Alberta's beef cattle research ranch in Kinsella is holding a bull sale on April 15. Yearling and two-year old bulls from three different breed groups developed from 30 years of selective breeding will be on offer. Bulls will be available for inspection anytime up to noon on sale day. The sale starts at 1 p.m. The ranch is located one-half mile north of Kinsella's main street. For more information, contact Gary Minchau at 336-3528 or 336-2388.

Canadian purebred beef cattle head to Sweden

For the third time in 14 months a shipment of purebred Charolais left Calgary airport bound for Sweden. This most recent shipment of five bulls were bought specifically because they were polled. The ability to raise cattle that don't grow horns appealed to the Swedish buyers, since there are almost no polled cattle in Scandinavia. Two polled Simmental bulls were also part of this latest shipment. For more information, contact Mark Kihn in Calgary at 295-2292.

Cont'd on page 5

Guide to vegetable crop diseases and pests available this summer

A practical guide to the diagnosis and management of vegetable crops will be available this summer. **Diseases and Pests of Vegetable Crops In Canada** is a companion volume to **Diseases of Field Crops in Canada** published by the Canadian Phytopathological Society. The Entomological Society of Canada is also a partner in the newest guide. The guide is intended for producers, extension personnel, students, diagnosticians and others interested in the diseases and pests of vegetable crops grown in Canada. Experts from across Canada contributed to the guide. Sets of 35 mm slides representing the many color plates used in the book will also be available. For more information about ordering the book and or slide sets, contact Dr. Ieuan Evans, Alberta Agriculture, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6; telephone (403)427-7098; or, FAX (403)422-9745.

Aggie Days, Spring Dairy Classic April 3-4

Aggie Days and the Spring Dairy Classic offer an educational program and premiere dairy show April 3 and 4 at the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede. Family fun day on April 4 features free admission to the Agriculture Pavilion for Aggie Days. Designed to provide children with an understanding of Alberta's many agricultural resources, Aggie Days gives an "all senses" and "hands on" experience. Tour stations include cow milking, flour milling, sheep shearing and exotic animals. Ayrshire, Jersey and showmanship classes run the first day of the dairy show, followed the next day by a Holstein show and sale. For more information, contact Lynda Sharai at 261-9316 about Aggie Days and Karen Legault 261-0171 about the Spring Dairy Classic.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

March 23, 1992

For immediate release

APR 1992

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

March 23, 1992
For immediate release

Check last year's forage seeding in early spring

Farmers should do a careful field check of their last year's forage seeding to confirm the stand has established and survived the winter says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The check should be done after spring growth starts in your area," says Myron Bjorge, supervisor of forage crops at the Lacombe-based field crops branch. "This is especially important where establishment conditions were difficult such as with extreme drought or with companion crops.

"Companion crops are especially competitive when their yield was high or harvest was delayed past mid August. If establishment conditions were unfavorable, spring forage growth may be late and growth itself slow. Your evaluation will determine whether you need to reseed a field or areas in the field."

Bjorge has a number of tips for field evaluations. The entire field should be looked at as some locations such as high and low areas and hillsides may have poorer growth compared to the rest of the field. Record the number of each forage species per foot of row or per square foot since plant density is related to crop yield. Watch for gaps where no forage has grown. Check areas where a companion crop lodged and where swaths laid--both can hamper forage growth.

Plant density and the evenness of the stand should be considered in an evaluation he says. "What looks like a poor stand due to small plants may still have reasonable yield potential provided the plants are vigorous. Forage stands may also thicken up when they are fully established."

Compensation for low plant density comes with favorable growing conditions. With good conditions a plant can produce more shoots per plant. For example, alfalfa can produce 50 or more shoots per plant in low density stands. As well, creeping rooted grasses, such as smooth brome grass and creeping red fescue, spread by developing additional plants.

(Cont'd)

Check last year's forage seeding in early spring (cont'd)

Bjorge notes the minimum alfalfa plant density that will give full yield with good moisture during the year following seeding is about eight to 10 plants per square foot. "Less dense stands might not give full yield initially. Old, but uniform stands, with a density of one or two healthy plants per square foot can produce at or near optimum yield levels."

In dry areas such as the Brown and Dark Brown soil zones, plant density may be fairly low and still give a satisfactory crop yield. In a new stand of Russian wildrye or Altai wildrye, for example, three healthy plants per foot of row, regardless of row spacing, is adequate.

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Contact: Myron Bjorge
782-4641

March 23, 1992
For immediate release

Ascospores increase blackleg of canola infestation threat

Ascospore isn't a common term for most canola farmers, but this form of the blackleg fungus could be a threat to their canola fields says an Alberta Environment plant pathologist.

The devastating virulent blackleg of canola fungus is seed-borne, but disease build up occurs on overwintered, infected canola stubble. The blackleg fungus forms two types of spores in overwintered host tissue: asexually produced pycnidiospores and sexually produced ascospores says Prem Kharbanda who works out of the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville. Ascospores pose more of a threat as they can be carried by the wind for between five and eight kilometres he adds.

Kharbanda has studied blackleg of canola in Alberta since 1983. "Virulent blackleg was introduced into eastern Alberta most likely by infected seed, and so far ascospores have played little role in the spread of disease," he says. "During the past two years, however, ascospore activity in east central Alberta has been on the increase."

Kharbanda looked for ascospores in extensive field surveys and laboratory studies trying to determine the role they play in the most damaging disease of canola in Canada. Ascospores were not discovered until 1988. In 1989 ascospores were suspected in one sample and in 1990 were confirmed in a sample from 1989 crop stubble. By 1991, ascospores were abundant in samples from two of the five fields surveyed in Alberta Agriculture's northeast region.

"The discovery of ascospores gives a warning that the spread of blackleg of canola--so far satisfactorily controlled through farmer awareness programs--could increase at a more rapid rate," he says.

Since ascospores can travel several kilometres on the wind, the positive effects of an individual farmer's crop rotations could be offset by ascospores introduced from infested neighboring fields. "The result is that control for blackleg could be much more difficult. So it becomes paramount that farmers in an infested region work together to combat the disease," Kharbanda says.

(Cont'd)

Among the important management strategies are crop rotations of three to four years and eradiction of volunteer canola for control of the blackleg fungus. Farmers should always buy seed that has tested free of disease to avoid introducing blackleg into non-infested areas.

Kharbanda also suggests farmers look into whether recently licensed blackleg-tolerant cultivars are available in their region.

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Contact: Dr. Prem Kharbanda
632-8227

RELEASE EMBARGOED
Not for release before March 23, 1992

Farm fatalities cut in half since 1981

One less farm fatality in 1991 than the previous year is one less statistic, and one more chance to improve farm safety awareness says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Today, farm fatalities in Alberta are less than half of what they were 10 years ago," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, farm safety program manager. "As we release the 1991 farm fatality statistics, we are encouraged by the decreasing numbers, especially when comparing the 32 farm fatalities in 1981 to the 15 in 1991.

"This strength is also reinforced by the programs geared to rural youth and the safety messages they are encouraged to take home. Only two of the 15 farm fatalities in 1991 were children, down from eight in 1990," says Kyeremanteng.

The majority of 1991's fatalities occured during the months of May and July. "These months are typically busy seeding and haying seasons," he says. "With our newest program's launch today (March 23) we hope to acquire the attention of the parents before these seasons get underway," he adds. **(Editor's note: See accompanying story.)**

The safety campaign revolves around a brochure titled "An interview with *Farm Accident*". The brochure will reach 10,000 homes through the rural school system. Children will have the opportunity through a contest to reveal how they would keep *Farm Accident* from visiting their farm.

The joint farm safety campaign for 1992 joins Alberta Agriculture with John Deere Limited to encourage rural children to be on the look-out for potential farm accidents.

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Contact:	Solomon Kyeremanteng 427-2186	Wendy Fountain, John Deere (416) 945-7345

RELEASE EMBARGOED
Not for release before March 23, 1992

Don't turn your back on *Farm Accident*

Today (March 23) rural school children will discover an unique way to be on the look out for a *Farm Accident* says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"But this isn't just any farm accident," says farm safety program manager Solomon Kyeremanteng. "Our 1992 'Don't turn your back on *Farm Accident*' campaign revolves around a fictional character named *Farm Accident*."

The campaign starts today as the first of 10,000 brochures to be distributed to rural Alberta children, are given to students at Blackfalds Elementary School. Jimmy Burns, a child reporter, interviews *Farm Accident* in the brochure.

The children are encouraged to tell in a simple story or drawing how they would keep *Farm Accident* from visiting their farm. The best 450 responses that are the most relevant to the program, says Kyeremanteng, will receive prizes.

"It's important to note there isn't just one first-place winner. We will select 25 first place winners to receive a John Deere radio control toy tractor. There will also be 250 fifth place winners who will receive a *Farm Accident* T-shirt," says Kyeremanteng.

"Through this creative copy, *Farm Accident* reveals how he can happen anytime, anywhere--especially when children aren't paying attention," says Lawrence Ruud, John Deere's general sales manager. "*Farm Accident* emphasizes to the children that he can be anything, as he says in the interview 'as deep as a well or as tall as an auger'."

As part of the campaign kick-off the 1991 farm fatality statistics will be released (**Editor's note: See accompanying story**). "We find encouraging strength in the decreasing numbers," says Kyeremanteng. "This strength is also from awareness programs for rural youth that they pass on to their parents."

(Cont'd)

Kyeremanteng also notes that only two of the 15 farm fatalities in 1991 were children.

"We hope to encourage the parents of these children to increase their safety measures around the farm. The slogan 'Don't turn your back on Farm Accident' is a catchy way to emphasize keeping your eyes open on the farm, and your awareness level up," says Kyeremanteng.

This is the second joint farm safety campaign between Alberta Agriculture and John Deere Limited to remind Alberta farmers and their families of the importance of farm safety.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

To: Editors and News Directors

National Soil Conservation Week is April 9 through 15. Articles in support of this national awareness week will appear in this and the next two issues of **Agri-News**.

If you didn't receive a media kit, and would like one, please contact Barb Shackel in Edmonton at 422-4385.

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National Soil Conservation Week

April 13-19, 1992

Agriculture Canada

Alberta AGRICULTURE

March 23, 1992
For immediate release

Eye in sky gives fresh perspective for conservation planning

Looking at his farm from the sky gave Lorne Cooley a new perspective, and helped him develop his own farm conservation plan.

With aerial photographs providing an eye in the sky, and other sources of information, Cooley and nine other Pincher Creek area farmers developed plans to conserve their soil and water resources while maintaining farm productivity.

The 10 farmers got their start at a farm conservation planning workshop organized last year by Bob Lyons, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist at Pincher Creek. For the workshop, Lyons enlisted the aid of department colleague Tom Goddard, a soil conservation specialist.

"Farm conservation planning is a process of documenting the soil and water resources on a farm, examining current farming practices and other options, and then selecting the most appropriate practices for the years ahead," explains Goddard.

Before the meeting, participants ordered aerial photographs of their farms, including an enlargement of a quarter section they wanted to focus on. During two days of sessions they used these air photos to map soil types and soil degradation problems. They also learned about other sources of information about their farms such as municipal assessments. Discussions on various farming practices and conservation tips helped them make plans to incorporate some of those techniques into their farming operations.

Cooley, who farms 18 miles east of Pincher Creek, developed a plan to improve productivity on some eroded knolls. Like most farmers he's kept busy with his regular farming operations, but made time to apply manure to these eroded areas to improve fertility and soil structure.

Positive feedback from the original workshop participants generated another workshop for Pincher Creek area farmers last month. In fact, farm conservation planning has really caught on, especially in the southern half of Alberta says Goddard. Many district agriculturists, agricultural fieldmen and other extension agents are involved in helping interested farmers develop conservation plans.

(Cont'd)

Eye in sky gives fresh perspective for conservation planning (cont'd)

Two approaches are being taken: group planning, like the Pincher Creek workshop, and one-on-one planning. Groups sessions are proving to be the more popular, with an average of one workshop held somewhere in the province every two or three weeks.

The growing interest in farm conservation planning is partly because it can be linked to other farm management activities, Goddard notes. "Mapping fields and determining the productivity and conservation needs of the landscape are the backbone of a farm production plan. The analysis of that production plan projects what the farm income may be.

"The conservation planning approach to farm management provides a long-term production plan for the farm and a method of tracking progress and evaluating changes in the farming system. A farm conservation plan can include a cropping plan, a livestock management plan and partial budgets to evaluate a change in the production system.

"Farm conservation planning helps producers establish where they're at and where they could go. They can see their farming practices as an interrelated whole and choose the best practices for the long term."

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March 23, 1992
For immediate release

ConservACTION quacks its way to soil conservation success

If you'd like to solve the riddle of what goes "quack" and helps conserve soil and water at the same time, ask one of the Strathcona County farmers participating in the Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association's ConservACTION Program.

"ConservACTION is working with private landowners to increase co-operation between agriculture and waterfowl and other wildlife, to find a way for them to share the land," says ConservACTION co-ordinator Carol Smith. The three-year program is focusing its efforts on agricultural methods that prevent soil degradation, maintain water quality and also benefit wildlife habitat.

One ConservACTION project, initiated in 1991, is near Josephburg on 140 acres owned by Jim and Velma (Toni) Ball. The project is part of ConservACTION's dense nesting cover program.

Many ducks nest on uplands adjacent to sloughs. When land is farmed right up to the edge of sloughs, these ducks have nowhere to nest. Through this program, farm land next to wetlands is seeded to a mixture of perennial grasses. This provides nesting cover for ducks and protects the soil from erosion all year long.

Agreements are made with co-operating landowners to establish upland habitat for waterfowl and maintain that habitat for 10 years. "The program is a partnership," says Smith. "Generally, ConservACTION provides the seed and any herbicide required, and the landowners do the seeding and weed control. They're familiar with the land, and they have the equipment."

She notes that weed control is essential to prevent the upland area from becoming a source of weeds for neighboring fields.

The landowners also receive lease payments to compensate them for the loss of agricultural production from the land. "The lease payments are based on 70 percent of a 10-year average from Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance," Smith says. "The landowners are not making what they could if they had a crop in." As a result, the program appeals to those who have a strong interest in wildlife.

(Cont'd)

ConservACTION quacks its way to soil conservation success (cont'd)

The project on the Ball's land represents the first time a dense nesting cover project has been tried on Class 1 soils. The 1991 grass growth at this site was much heavier than the growth on Class 4 and 5 soils, typical of previous nesting cover projects. So, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife's fish and wildlife division is now preparing a proposal to handle this heavy growth.

For example, instead of waiting for five years for the cover to become established--the normal practice on poorer soils--the co-operator may be allowed to take a delayed hay cut starting in 1992. (The first hay cut each year needs to be delayed until after July 15, when most ducks have finished nesting). A fire guard may also be constructed if the build up of dead vegetation becomes a problem.

Other ConservACTION projects include nest box and duck box distribution, planting trees and shelterbelts, installing nesting rafts for waterfowl and fencing wetlands to improve shoreline habitat by controlling livestock access. During 1992, either Ducks Unlimited or ConservACTION will be doing a nest count inventory of the sites.

ConservACTION is an interagency effort focusing on the rural area of Strathcona County. The Sherwood Park Fish and Game Association is teamed up with Environment Canada, the fish and wildlife division of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, and Strathcona County. The program also works closely with Ducks Unlimited and other wildlife habitat conservation agencies.

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March 23, 1992
For immediate release

Programs link farmers, sustainable agriculture and wildlife habitat

For many Alberta farmers and ranchers, just keeping their operations going in these tough economic times takes all their energy and more money than depressed grain markets provide.

Farmers may have heard the alarming reports about declining waterfowl populations, endangered species and serious habitat loss. And, while they may be interested in taking steps to preserve wildlife, they simply don't have the resources to shoulder all the responsibility and costs of preserving wildlife habitat.

"Landowner participation is crucial for wildlife conservation on the prairies but our whole society benefits from wildlife," says Les Wetter, an agrologist with Ducks Unlimited in Edmonton. "Alberta Prairie CARE, and other similar programs, are helping interested farmers and ranchers to build a sustainable future for both agriculture and wildlife."

These programs allow society to share the costs of securing and developing wildlife habitat while giving landowners economically viable land use options. Based on the compatibility between sustainable agriculture and wildlife habitat, the programs include measures such as retaining crop residues, reducing tillage operations, planting field shelterbelts and growing perennial crops on marginal lands to help reduce erosion, maintain soil organic matter, control salinity and increase soil moisture. These same methods also provide wildlife with a place to raise their young.

Alberta Prairie CARE is delivered by Ducks Unlimited, a private, non-profit organization, and Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. Alberta Prairie CARE is a major component of the waterfowl habitat restoration programs offered through the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

"The North American Waterfowl Management Plan is one of the largest conservation projects ever carried out anywhere," says Wetter. "Its goal is to bring duck populations back to the levels of the early 1970s."

(Cont'd)

The plan is funded by U.S. federal and state governments and Canadian partners including the Canadian Wildlife Service, Wildlife Habitat Canada, Alberta Agriculture, Agriculture Canada's Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife and Ducks Unlimited.

"About 20 per cent of the North American duck population nests in Alberta," says Wetter, "so we're a key player in the plan." Alberta Prairie CARE provides incentives to farmers in pothole country to set aside some parcels of land or modify management practices so wildlife and agriculture can co-exist.

Alberta Prairie CARE is already making a difference adds Wetter. "This past year in Alberta over 7,000 acres of marginal land were seeded to grass under the program. As well, 50,000 acres were covered by agreements with individuals to allow their land to be used as wildlife habitat. Alberta Prairie CARE also conducted 33 demonstration projects with a total of 242 co-operating farmers, to show how appropriate measures are implemented and what they can achieve."

And Alberta Prairie CARE is not the only choice for landowners. For example, PFRA's Permanent Cover Program provides financial incentives for farmers to keep marginal land under perennial grass or other permanent cover.

Alberta Agriculture is making additional trees available for field shelterbelts. Both PFRA and Alberta Agriculture are assisting producer groups and rural municipalities to promote and encourage local resource conservation.

Buck for Wildlife, operated by the fish and wildlife division of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, advises and assists landowners wishing to enhance fish and wildlife habitat. While its projects emphasize habitat conservation, they also conserve soil and water resources.

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March 23, 1992
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

$7 MILLION ADDED TO CROW BENEFIT OFFSET PROGRAM

The Alberta cabinet recently approved a $7 million expenditure to enable the government to meet its commitment to the Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program. Total program expenditure for 1991-92 is now estimated at $47 million. The program was extended to March 31, 1993 last November. It provides a $10 per tonne benefit to offset distortions caused by paying the federal transportation subsidy to the railways and not producers. "It is evident by the high level of activity in the cattle industry, and by the number of claims being processed by the department, that the Crow Benefit Offset Program is fulfilling its objectives," says Ernie Isley, Alberta's agriculture minister. "Producers are feeding more cattle, and feeding them to a heavier weight. While the effects are most visible in Alberta's vibrant cattle industry, they can be seen in other sectors of the livestock industry as well." He adds, according to department estimates, the program has generated an additional $100 million annually in total provincial farm revenue. For more information, contact Ken Moholitny, Alberta Agriculture central program support, at 422-9167 in Edmonton.

NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR ALBERTA FARM WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Nominations are now being accepted for the Alberta Farm Women's Network (AFWN) farm woman of the year. The AFWN is seeking nominees who are active in their community, provide leadership in organizations and also for their contribution and dedication to farm and family. Both nominees and nominators must be 18 years of age and be a resident of Alberta. Nomination submissions should include a description of the contributions and or achievement made by the nominee and how her efforts have enriched the lives of rural Albertans. The award winner will be honored at the fourth Alberta Farm Women's Conference in Edmonton January 29 and 30, 1993. For more information or nomination forms, contact Janet Walter at 347-0660 in Red Deer, or write the AFWN at 9623-83 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 3A3.

(Cont'd)

PULSE CROP TRIALS 1991 RESULTS AVAILABLE

A report on 1991 pulse crop test plots are now available from Alberta Agriculture district offices in central and northeastern Alberta. The 1991 results are from the fourth year the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission has co-ordinated crop plots in central Alberta. Sites are near Wetaskiwin, Olds, Lacombe and Vegreville testing pea and fababean varieties. Last year also marked a new approach to the project. A feed analysis program testing for protein and lysine in 24 pea varieties are also part of the project. The trials are a Farming for the Future on-farm demonstration project. For a copy of the report, contact a central or northeastern Alberta Agriculture district office, or for more information contact Doug Edgar, president of the zone two commission at 227-2443 in Innisfail, or Neil Miller at 782-3301 in Lacombe.

CHICKEN PRODUCERS LAUNCH ALBERTA LABEL

A distinctive blue and yellow "Alberta Chicken" label is now appearing on fresh chicken products in grocery stores. The label, a co-operative program with chicken processors and retailers, allows consumers to identify chicken that has been grown in Alberta and met high Canadian inspection standards. An advertising and promotional campaign will support the labels. This action comes as chicken producers face the prospect of strong import competition in the next 18 months. Roger Lavigne, chairman of the Alberta Chicken Producers, says Alberta producers are concerned about the current GATT negotiations and the impact of imports. "But whatever happens with GATT, we want people in Alberta to know more about our product and our industry. The first step is for people to actually be able to identify that the chicken they are buying is produced and processed in Alberta." He adds most consumers aren't aware that some "fresh" chicken sold in supermarkets may be produced outside Alberta and shipped from as far away as the deep South in the U.S. "When people see the Alberta Chicken label, they can be assured that it really is fresh. We want the public to be able to identify our product and our guarantee of freshness and quality." For more information, contact Roger King, general manager, Alberta Chicken Producers at 488-2125 in Edmonton.

(Cont'd)

BEEF PRODUCERS MAILED CODE OF PRACTICE

The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) has sent every cattle producer in the province their own copy of the new beef cattle code of practice. The ACC is encouraging all producers to evaluate their operations against the code to ensure they're providing the highest possible standard of care for their animals. The voluntary code of practice was developed by animal welfare experts from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies and Agriculture Canada. The code is unique because cattle producers took a leading role in formulating the code's standards and guidelines. For more information, contact Fred van Ingen in Gibbons at 998-7225 or Gordon Mitchell in Calgary at 275-4400.

LLOYDMINSTER EXHIBITION ORGANIZING WOOL SALE

The sheep committee of the Lloydminster Exhibition Association is organizing its first wool sale. Producers are requested to contact the Lloydminster Exhibition with their commitment of wool by April 30. If an adequate amount of wool is confirmed, a June auction date will be set. For more information contact Val at the Lloydminster Exhibition at (306)825-5571.

INTERNATIONAL AGRI&RANCH TRADESHOW IN CALGARY APRIL 29 - MAY 1

A new agricultural tradeshow will debut in Calgary on April 29. The three day International Agri&Ranch Tradeshow will focus on current products, service and technology. Irrigation, ranching and equestrian sectors will be included. The trade show will be held at Stampede Park's Roundup Centre in Calgary. For more information, contact Tom McCaffrey in Edmonton at 469-2400.

STREET CENTS FARM SHOW AVAILABLE ON VIDEO

A fast-moving episode from the CBC's Street Cents series looking at farming and rural life is now available for loan on video cassette from Alberta Agriculture's central film library. Segments include a milk taste test done at a Cochrane high school, pesticides and pest management, and stereotypes about country life. The series is aimed at a teenaged urban audience. For loan information, please write the Alberta Agriculture Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

March 30, 1992

Predicting what's under the wool

Ultrasound may be a tool to help lamb producers meet the challenge of providing leaner lamb says an Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist.

In response to consumer demand for leaner lamb, a new classification system for lamb carcasses is expected this fall says Kim Stanford of the beef cattle and sheep branch. The new system proposes paying producers for their slaughter lambs based in part on the percentage of lean meat in the carcass.

"The challenge to sheep producers will be in selecting breeding stock to meet the consumer demand for lean, muscular lamb," Stanford says.

Predicting a lamb's carcass composition by visual appraisal is difficult she says. "By the time the lambs are hanging from the rail in the slaughter plant, it's a little too late to save lean, well-muscled lambs for breeding stock."

One possible means of predicting carcass composition in live sheep is the use of real-time ultrasound. Real-time ultrasound provides an image of body tissues and has been used for pregnancy dignosis both for humans and sheep.

Results from a recent research trial conduced by Alberta Agriculture in co-operation with Agriculture Canada demonstrate ultrasound can be used to predict both subcutaneous (under the skin) fat depth and ribeye area in sheep.

"If you know a lamb's weight, a measurement of the depth of fat under the skin will provide a good estimate of carcass lean meat yield, while the measurement of the area of the ribeye muscle provides an estimate of overall carcass muscling," says Stanford.

Previous attempts at predicting carcass composition in sheep were only moderately successful she notes. "Some physical characteristics of sheep, such as the presence of wool, loose skin and a mobile subcutaneous fat layer made it difficult to collect accurate ultrasound measurements."

This study, she adds, demonstrates recent advances in ultrasound technology have improved the accuracy in predicting a sheep's carcass composition. Stanford predicts an increasing use of real-time ultrasound as a tool for the selection of sheep breeding stock.

Contact: *Kim Stanford*
948-8517

On-farm research project investigated toadflax control

A three year on-farm research project near High River has yielded some successful ways of controlling toadflax.

"Very limited research had been done to date on in-crop toadflax control, and toadflax had been an increasing problem weed in the M.D. of Foothills," says Allen Toly, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in High River who was one of the project co-ordinators.

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

"Similar to other perennial weeds, drier years and reduced crop competition enlarged the infestations," he adds. "Because toadflax is a persistent perennial weed that spreads by creepingroots and prolific seed production, control is important, so we're very pleased with the project's results."

Funded by the Farming for the Future program, the three-year project involved Blackie area farmer Darryl Laycraft. Its objective was a field-scale demonstration of three post-emergent herbicides—Estaprop, Ally and Glean—in wheat and barley. Currently, Estaprop is the only herbicide registered for top growth control in wheat and barley. The project also included a demonstration of the combination of fallow and herbicide on two adjoining summerfallow fields.

"After three years of the recommended herbicide applications, the number of toadflax plants on all treated fields in the main project area was noticeably reduced. The best in-crop control in this project was with Estaprop," says Toly. "But a few smaller toadflax patches remained in all fields."

While the spray treatments were effective, he adds, "A farmer would have to keep an eye on the patches to ensure they didn't become a problem."

The second aspect of the project was a happy accident notes Toly. In 1989 Laycraft was summerfallowing two adjacent 20-acre fields. He worked the fields three times with a heavy duty cultivator and followed with a September application of Roundup. The following two years the fields were seeded to barley and a post-emergent herbicide was used.

"What we saw was almost perfect control," says Toly. "After a thorough on-foot inspection in late September last year after the fields had been straight combined, we found only four to five scattered toadflax plants and no Canada thistle or quackgrass."

Toly says area farmers were kept up-to-date on the research project through the district newsletter. Some farmers have already tried using the methods he adds.

The 60-acre main demonstration area had a moderate infestation of toadflax patches and a few patches of Canada thistle and quackgrass. The area was broken down into five acre plots. Four of the largest toadflax patches in these plots were staked and shoot counts taken. "By 1991 the toadflax patches were so reduced in size, this procedure was no longer practical," notes Toly.

The main test area was seeded to Katepwa spring wheat in 1988 and 1989. That was followed by Argyle barley in 1990 and 1991.

Contact:	*Allen Toly*	*Darryl Laycraft*
	652-8302	*684-3360*

Teacher's agricultural project nets national award

In the 17th century, English political and educational philosopher John Locke wrote people's knowledge couldn't go beyond their experience. That principle of knowledge growing from experience was the backdrop in a successful match of urban grade four students with a farm family that also netted the project a national teaching award.

Last April 58 students, half from Strathmore's Brentwood Elementary School and half from Calgary's St. Peter Elementary, spent the weekend on Strathmore area farms. Their educational experience began with a county tour. Following a Friday evening community banquet that included all their parents, the students started their weekend on-farm learning.

The project, designed by Brentwood Elementary teacher Marilyn Lanz, came as the finishing touch to her participation at the first Summer Agricultural Education Institute in Lethbridge during the summer of 1990. The institute was established to build agricultural awareness in Alberta classrooms.

The institute requires its students write a paper to complete the course. Many of the teachers chose to design agricultural unit plans. Lanz, who has been at Brentwood for 10 years, had already been incorporating agriculture into her grade four social studies classes, so wanted to do something else. Her inspiration came from her institute classmates who returned excited from being billeted with a farm family for a weekend.

"It was so exciting to listen to the city teachers," says Lanz who originally hails from a farm near Etzikom. "They discovered a new world they never thought of before." Because adults were that excited with their hands-on experience, she thought the same would apply to her students.

The enthusiasm did carry over, although the first weekend match took most of a school year to organize from Lanz writing a proposal and presenting it to the local school board and gathering support from the local agricultural industry, to when the urban Strathmore and Calgary students arrived back tired and happy from their weekend of learning about life and work on a farm.

Lanz saw herself as in the middle of a triangle between her students who were all "town" kids from Strathmore, the Calgary students and the farm family hosts. Students were matched with a farm family that had children roughly the same age.

The urban students were immediately plunged into their farm experience. "Some were pulling calves the minute they came home from the banquet," recalls Lanz. The project's success was measured in how well it opened communication and understanding between those groups. "This opened doors between the communities," she says noting there's still contact between host farm families and urban students, and as the next project gets into gear, the rural and urban communities are continuing to mix.

The project always had strong support from the agricultural community and she says the national award is exciting because the educational community has recognized it as educationally valid, too.

Lanz will receive a $2,500 Hilroy fellowship from the Canadian Teachers' Federation on April 1 for the project. She is one of three Alberta and 21 national winners.

Hilroy fellowship awards were established in 1969 to acknowledge and reward active classroom teachers who have

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developed new ideas for improving teaching practices. Extensive applications must be submitted for screening on the provincial level and then are forwarded for national adjudication.

While Lanz will receive the award, she says she was only a facilitator. "It was the project itself that won," she says and adds credit should go to her school administration, the Strathmore community and Calgary teacher Beverly Dunne and her students, who were involved in the first farm weekend experience.

Opening doors between communities means the project will be repeated she adds. Parents and the local agricultural service board approached Lanz about continuing the project this school year. At an organization meeting last October, a parent committee took over co-ordinating the project.

In 1992 the project has expanded to include all the grade four classes at Brentwood not just Lanz's class. However, instead of the three-way exchange, this year's project involves only the Strathmore students and farmfamilies.

Lanz has also outlined the project to other teachers at the institute's promotional agricultural fair in Medicine Hat last November. The project's details are all in a binder form and can be shared with other schools who'd like to try a similar project. Says Lanz, "The program can stand on its own."Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture's Ag in Classroom program, says Lanz's project is what organizers hoped would come out of the institute. "Marilyn's commitment to creative agricultural awareness education and leadership amongst her staff and the community is on target with the institute's goals. Her project is also an outstanding example of what an excellent educator can do with a high quality professional development opportunity."

The third Summer Agricultural Education Institute will be held at Lakeland College in Vermilion August 10 through 21. The full credit, fourth year level university course, accredited by the University of Lethbridge, is open to practising Alberta teachers of all grade levels and fourth year education students.

Created for its agricultural awareness value, the institute has received considerable support from the agricultural industry. The United Farmers of Alberta fund scholarships for the institute.

Brochures with application forms are available by calling the Agriculture in the Classroom program in Edmonton at 427-2402.

Contact:	*Betty Gabert* *427-2403*	*Marilyn Lanz* *934-5013*

Food quality, safety enhanced with preventative analysis

A system originally designed for the NASA space program can now be used to help Alberta food processors in producing high quality, safe food.

Alberta Agriculture's food laboratory services branch will assist processors with an in-plant analytical testing program known as the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) to help producers and processors enhance their existing quality assurance programs.

"This system shifts the emphasis from final product testing to raw material quality and process control," says Connie Zagrosh-Miller who will be responsible for the new extension program.

"High quality, safe food production is always a priority. These issues have also become increasingly important to both domestic consumers and export customers," she says. "And, part of remaining competitive in today's markets means food processors must be able to consistently supply high quality foods." HACCP examines the steps involved in processing products, anticipates where problems could occur and establishes ways to prevent a hazard from occurring she adds. Its design also allows all workers to share in the responsibility of quality assurance.

Zagrosh-Miller became familiar with HACCP while completing a masters degree in food microbiology at the University of Alberta. Her research focused on improving the microbiological safety of a cooked meat product. One method she used was HACCP analysis.

For more information on HACCP, contact Zagrosh-Miller or Dave Schroder at 427-4054, or write the Food Laboratory Services Branch, O.S. Longman Building, 5th Floor, 6909-116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2.

Contact: *Connie Zagrosh-Miller*
427-4054

Ottawa, Washington among destinations of 4-H trip winners

Thirteen Alberta 4-Hers are travelling to four destinations including the national capitals of Canada and the United States during early April.

"All of the trips were won by these 4-H members during last year's provincial selections program," says Marguerite Stark, provincial camping and 4-H exchange specialist. Trip awards are based on 4-H and community involvement as well as interpersonal skills.

Six of the Alberta 4-Hers will go to Ottawa this week (April 3) for a national citizenship seminar. Participants are Stacy Borduzak of Vimy, Brian Anderson of Taber, Howard Hixt of Beiseker, Marla Lucas of Claresholm, Chris Simpson of Bentley and Andrea Wojcik of High River. Accompanying these delegates is Andrea Church, regional 4-H specialist based in Airdrie.

"Delegates gain a much greater awareness of the Canadian political system and often see how difficult it is for politicians to please everyone," says Stark of the Canadian 4-H Council sponsored seminar. Among the seminar activities are visiting Parliament Hill, attending a House of Commons session and touring Government House.

Brian Davies, 18, of Dewberry is going south and east to represent Alberta at a U.S. national 4-H members' conference. Canadian delegates will meet in Ottawa on April 2 before leaving for Washington, D.C.

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"This is one of the most prestigious 4-H trip awards available in Alberta," notes Stark. Davies, an eight-year member of the Vermilion Light Horse Club, will participate in group sessions with American 4-H members discussing aspects of both 4-H and agriculture. In addition to the educational sessions, delegates will also have the opportunity to see historical points of interest including the Arlington Cemetery, the Smithsonian Institute, the Lincoln Memorial, Capitol Hill and the White House.

Also in a political theme is the Alberta Girls' Parliament. Candice Hueppelsheuser of Blackfalds, Jennifer Lawrence of Clandonald, Trina Phillips of Barrhead and Rose Marie Trensen of Rimbey will be the 4-H representatives at the mock parliament at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre from April 1 to 4.

Modelled on the Alberta Legislature, participants will tour the Legislature in Edmonton as well as debate in their own parliament. All participants are age 15 through 18 and include representatives from the Rangers, Cadets, Junior Leaders, Pathfinders, Junior Forest Wardens and Canadian Girls in Training (CGIT).

The Alberta Girls' Parliament held its first session in 1972. Founded by Ethel Wilson, a former MLA and cabinet minister, the mock parliament is sponsored by the Girl Guides of Canada.

Two Alberta 4-Hers, Stacey Bouw, 18, of Bow Island and Brenda Eleniak, 20, of Tofield, went to Winnipeg for a national 4-H careers conference sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada.

"The conference is an extensive career development program," says Stark. "Delegates will explore careers related to agriculture, receive guidance in career choices and study the importance of agriculture to Canada's economy.

Before the March 28 to April 1 conference began, Bouw and Elaniak had the opportunity to spend four days with a Manitoba host family. Delegates also toured cultural, education and business points of interest while in the Winnipeg area.

Contact:	*Marguerite Stark*	*Janice Taylor*
	948-8510	*948-8514*

Municipalities unite to spread conservation message

In a unique co-operative approach to spreading conservation awareness, a dozen agricultural service boards in northeast Alberta have banded together as the Northeast Conservation Connection (NECC).

"As a group they recognized they could accomplish more together more efficiently," says Carol Bettac, northeast regional soil conservation co-ordinator. "The NECC can be summed up in how it's defined as 'municipalities working together to promote environmentally sustainable agriculture'." Working together has included co-operative programming and pooling resources adds Bettac.

The NECC partners are: the counties of St. Paul, Minburn, Vermilion River, Lamont, Smoky Lake, Beaver and Two Hills; the municipal districts of Wainwright, Provost and Bonnyville; and, the Lac La Biche and Bonnyville improvement districts.

A basic objective of NECC is promotion of soil conservation issues and practices. "The larger group allows the NECC to avoid duplicating efforts and awareness activities can have a bigger scope," notes Bettac. The NECC has already funded television and radio advertisements, tours, field days, meetings, workshops and promotional items.

For example, during National Soil Conservation Week from April 13 through 19 the NECC will run a series of radio advertisements on three local stations that serve the area as well as newspaper ads says Larry Lemothe, current NECC chair.

Contact:	*Carol Bettac*	*Larry Lemothe*
	853-8227	*645-3301*

Land stewardship municipal priority in Rocky View

The Municipal District of Rocky View is taking the challenge of conserving agricultural land in hand through long-term planning and good communication with its Calgary neighbors.

The challenge of conserving agricultural land is especially tough for rural municipalities near Alberta's larger cities. Not only is there a need to prevent soil degradation that can seriously reduce agricultural productivity, municipalities must also guard against excessive urban and semi-urban development that would take prime farm land permanently out of production.

Conserving the agricultural land base is a complex issue, but Rocky View is finding that the opportunities for positive change are even greater. "With an open perspective and a vision for the future, we can make a difference," says Rocky View's agricultural fieldman Tim Dietzler.

Rocky View, which borders Calgary on all but the southwest portion of the city, adopted its General Municipal Plan in 1983. This plan emphasizes good land stewardship. Its agricultural objectives are to conserve the agricultural land base, ensure a variety of agricultural development opportunities are permitted on agricultural land, minimize the impact of non-agricultural land uses on farm land and control the subdivision of higher capability agricultural land.

The importance of good farm land and stewardship was reconfirmed when Rocky View's Agricultural Service Board (ASB) developed its first municipal conservation plan in 1989. Based on input from government, agricultural agencies, industry and farmers, the plan identifies six conservation issues as priorities in Rocky View. These issues are: land stewardship and societal awareness; residue management for soil conservation; perennial weed control as it affects soil conservation; soil salinity and problem soils; the economics of soil management; and, conflicting government policies that discourage producers from using soil conservation measures.

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The ASB is focusing its programming in response to these issues, with farm-level planning as the key mechanism. "Farm conservation planning is a structured consultative process involving interested landowners and our conservation coordinator," explains Dietzler, who supervises the program. "They work together to document the landowner's land and water resources, identify existing or potential conservation problems, and outline options for change.

"The full spectrum of conservation options is considered in each planning consultation. Landowners can set long-term farming goals, based on their individual situations, and achieve these goals while ensuring stewardship of their resources."

Often soil and water conservation are compatible with wildlife habitat enhancement. Several landowners are interested in this aspect, so wildlife specialists are providing input into their farm plans. Another key element of Rocky View's municipal conservation plan is an annual "Conservation Strategies" conference targeting both farmers and urban dwellers. The conferences provide forums for these two groups to discuss issues such as food safety, biotechnology, pesticide use and problem wildlife management.

"These conferences build a better understanding of the agricultural industry in our 'rural/urban' setting," says Dietzler, "and, they strengthen relations between the municipality and the City of Calgary. Calgary's committee on agriculture has been involved in the conferences and Mayor Al Duerr was a guest speaker in 1989."

Agri-News briefs

Alberta Swine A.I. Centre offered for sale

Alberta's Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley has announced the provincial government will consider purchase offers for the assets and operation of the Alberta Swine Artificial Insemination Centre located near Leduc. Selling the centre is in keeping with the government's original plan to privatize the facility after 10 years of operation. Opened in 1978 to increase the rate of genetic improvements in Alberta's swine herds, the facility serves as a collection and distribution centre for semen from top breeding boars. It also provides education and conducts research on swine reproductive technology. The facility is the only one of its kind in Alberta. Isley praised the centre's contribution to the swine industry in his announcement. "Privatization of this facility provides the private sector with a unique opportunity," says Isley. "It is evident from the growing demand for Alberta's live hogs, pork products, swine breeding stock and swine genetic material that the potential to increase sales is quite significant." More information on the sale process and conditions of sale are available from Ken Spiller at (403)427-5091 in Edmonton.

Sequel to edible wild plants video available

"Trees, shrubs, nuts and berries" (VT 930-26-1) is now on the shelves of Alberta Agriculture's central film library. The 60-minute video is a sequel to the popular "Edible Wild Plants". Renowned botanists Jim Duke and Jim Meuninck take viewers across North American identifying trees and shrubs plus provide folklore, folk medicine and little-known health tips. Another video, by the same producers, Media Methods, is also available for loan. "Cooking with edible flowers and culinary herbs" (VT 930-26-2) is a how-to for selecting, growing and preparing wild flowers, garden flowers and herbs for the dining table. For loan information, write the Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Llama manual now available

The Alberta Llama Breeders Association has published a guide on raising llamas. "At a time when diversification is being considered so intensely, and because the llama industry is one of the branches of agriculture that is being pursued, the llama breeders of Alberta felt it necessary to publish a manual on llama husbandry," says Ursula Stankievech, a member of the Parkland Llama and Alpaca Club and chair of the book committee. During the last decade the llama population in Canada has increased from a few hundred to 2,500 and about half are found on Alberta farms. In Alberta, there are a provincial association and regional clubs in northern, central and southern Alberta. The 36-page booklet, titled "Raising Llamas in Alberta—Why are they so popular?" will be available free of charge from Alberta Agriculture district offices, by writing Stankievech at R.R. 2, Three Hills, Alberta, T0M 1A0 or by calling 443-7489.

Guide to pit and quarry reclamation available

"A Users Guide to Pit and Quarry Reclamation in Alberta" is now available. The guide is a 1992 report of the Alberta Land Conservation and Reclamation Council. Sand and gravels pits or quarries are usually reclaimed to the original land use. The report

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outlines some of the alternate land uses including agriculture, forestry, wildlife habitat, fish habitat, recreation, residential and industrial use. The report provides a general introduction to the reclamation process and outlines factors to be considered in selecting a land use and reclamation method. While not a detailed guide to reclamation, it's intended to help decision making about suitable land uses and a guide to other information sources. The report is available from the Queen's Printers, 11510 Kingsway Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5G 2Y5 at a cost of $10. This report was produced for the reclamation research technical advisory committee, an interdepartmental provincial government research funding and management body. For more information on its research program contact Chris Powter, at Alberta Environment, 3rd Floor, 9820-106 Street, Edmonton, T5K 2J6, or call 427-4147.

4-H scholarship applications available, one deadline coming soon

Current and former Alberta 4-Hers interested in applying for an Alberta 4-H scholarship should get an application soon. The general deadline for scholarship applications is July 15, but some of the scholarships have earlier deadlines. The Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) scholarship has a much earlier deadline of May 15. Students planning to apply should complete and forward their application as soon as possible. The Petro-Canada 4-H Youth Leadership Award also has an early deadline of June 1. For more information about these particular scholarships and the scholarship program, please contact the Alberta Agriculture 4-H branch in Edmonton at 422-4444.

1992 breeders school highlights carcass grading, fertility

Space is filling up at the fifth annual Canadian National Breeders School. Headlined with the theme of "from the blackboard to the barnyard" the school will run May 27 through 31 at the University of Guelph. Neil Gillies, breeders school organizer and genetic improvement manager of the Canadian Charolais Association, says all cattlemen are welcome from any breed or sector of the beef business. A new special aspect of the school will be the use of ultrasound technology to evaluate fertility in both bulls and heifers. With changes to Canada's beef grading system, extensive discussions and demonstrations on carcasses and their value will be highlighted. For more information, contact Gillies in Calgary at 250-9242 or FAX 291-9324.

Limited space in advanced beef judging seminar

Only 25 spaces are available in an advanced beef cattle judging seminar to be held in Calgary June 8 through 10. The instructor will be John Edwards of Texas A&M University. The course will include: live steer to carcass relationship and evaluation; a comparison of Canadian and U.S. grading systems; oral reasons; using EPDs for selection; and, selection criteria for replacement heifers and herd bulls. The seminar is presented by the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede and the Canadian Charolais Association. For more information or to register, call Charlene at 261-0313 or FAX 262-3067.

Kinsella ranch bull sale April 15

The University of Alberta's beef cattle research ranch near Kinsella is holding a bull sale on April 15. Yearling and two-year old bulls from three different breed groups developed from 30 years of selective breeding will be on offer. Bulls will be available for inspection anytime up to noon on sale day. The sale starts at 1 p.m. The ranch is located one-half mile north on Kinsella's main street. For more information, contact Gary Minchau at 336-3528 or 336-2388.

Great pork debate April 10 in Red Deer

Pre-registration is required for the "great world pork debate" presented by the Alberta Pork Congress in Red Deer on April 10. The day long seminar features swine experts from Canada, the U.S., Great Britain and Australia. Speakers are Frank Aherne and George Foxcroft from the University of Alberta; Gary Dial and Jim Pettigrew from the University of Minnesota; and, Ray King from the Institute of Animal Science in Australia. The international opening ceremony will feature Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley. Among the topics are feed for lean, gilt pool management, protein needs of the pregnant gilt, seasonal breeding patterns, lactation feed and performance, and postweaning sow management. The $100 participation pass includes an international lunch and a personal souvenir note portfolio. For more information, contact the Alberta Pork Congress office in Red Deer at 340-5307.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

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April 6, 1992

Time will tell price spreads in new beef grading

An Alberta Agriculture market analyst predicts it will take until later this month before the market settles into the new beef grading system.

"By late April we should have a good idea of the price spreads between the three yield grades of A1, A2 and A3," says Ron Gietz. Each beef carcass will be graded for meat yield calculated from loin-eye area and fat thickness.

The new system, which went into effect yesterday (April 5), will introduce marbling into the Canadian grading system. "There has been considerable speculation about how marbling ratings will affect prices, and the market will provide the answer," Gietz says. "We should see whether or not there will be any premiums for the highest marbling grade, AAA."

Meanwhile, Alberta fed cattle prices are likely to be pressured down with the spring run of fed calves. "The odds of a price increase from week-to-week are relatively low during the spring and summer period," he notes. Gietz foresees an Alberta Direct Sales Steer price of $83/cwt. through April, $80 in May and even lower for the summer. Prices for Alberta slaughter steers and heifers did average above $80/cwt. through March.

Alberta feeder cattle markets appear to be caught in a holding pattern with no prominent trends. "Cattle under 700 lbs. should remain in tight supply and good demand, provided spring moisture conditions are at least adequate. My outlook is for steady prices through the spring months," he says.

Gietz also notes the Alberta beef herd is into its sixth consecutive year of increasing numbers. Based on January 1, 1992 U.S. and Canadian inventory statistics, the Alberta herd is the fifth largest of all states and provinces ranking behind Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Nebraska. Saskatchewan ranks 15, the next Canadian province on the list.

Contact: *Ron Gietz*
427-5376

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Special crop acres up in '91, slight decrease forecast in '92

Major specialty crop acreage rose dramatically with increased pea acreage in 1991, but surveyed Alberta farmers are planning to seed slightly fewer special crop acres in 1992 says an Alberta Agriculture crop statistician.

"With very low cereal prices in 1991, special crops were an attractive alternative for producers. Special crop acreage increased by 17 per cent," says Michelle Gietz. Special crop acreage rose from 325,000 acres (excluding forage seeds and potatoes) in 1990, to 381,400 acres in 1991. With forages and potato acreage included, the total acreage was over 500,000.

In particular, pea, grain corn, dry bean and lentil acreage rose dramatically in 1991. "Field pea acreage increased by 80 per cent, grain corn by 49 per cent, dry beans by 16 per cent and lentil acreage doubled," notes Gietz.

Safflower, sugar beet and silage corn remained relatively

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constant. Potatoes, mustard, canary seed and forage seed acreage decreased. Gietz's figures are from the 1991 special crop survey conducted by the department's statistics branch.

Field peas lead the way in terms of most acres seeded to a specialty crop. Little change in 1992 is expected from the 180,000 acres sown last year adds Gietz. Mustard continues to be the second most popular specialty crop with 70,000 acres grown in 1991.

Producers were also asked about their 1992 seeding intentions in the survey. "The indication is that there will be a slight decrease—around one per cent—in seeded specialty crops acres," says Gietz. "But note this is a conservative estimate as it's based only on the plans of producers who currently grow speciality crops."

Survey questionnaires were sent to all Alberta producers—just over 3,500 in 1991—reporting miscellaneous crops in their Canadian Wheat Board permit books. Nearly 1,500 questionnaires were returned.

Contact: *Michelle Gietz*
427-4011

Canola seed treatment preventative measure

Using treated seed in combination with seed tested free of virulent blackleg of canola are necessary to minimize the introduction of the disease on land previously free of the seed-borne fungus says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"It's essential canola growers only use seed that has been tested free of blackleg, but it's also critical to treat the canola seed with a fungicide before it's seeded to absolutely minimize your risks," says Ieuan Evans of the crop protection branch.

Evans notes registered seed treatments for canola are all combinations of lindane, an insecticide, and one or more fungicides. These fungicides are effective against both the seed-borne blackleg fungus as well as seedling blight caused by the **Rhizoctonia** fungus.

"As well as this protection from blackleg and seedling blight, the basic insecticide is systemic in the seed and usually gives effective early emergence control of flea beetles," he says. He adds in regions with high levels of flea beetles, a granular insecticide may be required for longer term control.

Evans says canola seeding rates influence the cost per acre of seed treatments. At recommended rates of four to five pounds per acre for Polish and five or more pounds per acre for Argentine canola varieties, costs are in the $2.50 to $3 range per acre. Costs are doubled when seeding at an eight to 10 pound per acre rate.

"Of course, the costs are more than worthwhile when the seed treatment prevents your crop being wiped out by flea beetles, seedling blight or the blackleg fungus," says Evans.

Besides the recommended test for blackleg of canola and using a seed treatment fungicide, proper crop rotations, weed control and control of volunteer canola are also essential preventative and control measures against the blackleg fungus.

Contact: *Dr. Ieuan Evans*
427-7098

Check calibration of seeding equipment

Checking calibration accuracy on seeding equipment as well as just checking the general field readiness of your equipment is a good exercise before you start seeding says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"A small error in calibration shouldn't significantly affect your yield," says Duane Wood, regional engineer based in Fairview, "But the Prairie Agriculture Machinery Institute (PAMI) has found large errors in calibration with some supplied charts, and recommends farmers check the application rate for themselves."

The actual application rate of a particular setting may vary with factors such as seed size, type and density he adds. "This is why the charts supplied by the manufacturer might not be completely accurate for all types of seed."

Wood says to start the check by carefully inspecting the equipment. "You'll find any seized levers or any other adjustments that might need to be made from the equipment sitting over the winter. If you have an air seeder, also note calibration can be affected by a leak in a pressurized tank, by a partially restricted seed boot or manifold, and by a poorly sealed air lock."

To do their own calibration, farmers should place containers under four or more delivery hoses. With an air seeder, use a cloth sack or pail with a screened lid to let air escape. "If you are checking an air seeder, it's important to run the fan and allow air to escape from the collection containers. This will account for air pressure differences at the meter system," Wood notes.

Determine the number of meter rotations made over a selected distance, for example 150 feet. Then rotate the meter the determined number of turns while collecting the sample. An accurate scale is an asset in weighing the samples and calculating their total weight.

The application rate is calculated by multiplying the total weight of the collected samples (in pounds) by 43,560. This number is then divided by the number of outlets used in the collection multiplied by the row spacing (in feet) and the distance of the test (in feet). This application rate can be compared to the manufacturer's chart.

"You can adjust the meter setting and repeat the calibration test until you find the setting of the rate you want. Note any errors on the manufacturer's chart for your future reference," suggests Wood.

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Some assistance is available in making calibration easier through devices such as a calibrated tube gauge. "These gauges are easy to use and come with instructions. One drawback is that they read in bushels per acre and that makes it harder to use with fine seeds and fertilizer where rates are expressed in pounds per acre," Wood says.

Weighing balance scales also provide accurate calibration with all products at most any application rate he says. "They usually read directly in pounds per acre and some scales may also be used to determine product densities."

Contact: Duane Wood
835-2291

Province-wide soil phosphorus study starts second year

Last year over 80 per cent of the test sites in a provincial study responded to phosphate fertilizer.

"This fact means that phosphate fertilizer is still very necessary for many Alberta farmers," says Ross McKenzie, a Lethbridge-based Alberta Agriculture soil fertility specialist and the manager of the three-year research project. Alberta soils are low in naturally occuring phosphorus, and the province's farmers spend about $100 million on phosphate fertilizers annually.

The project team established 45 research sites throughout Alberta in 1991 as part of the first province-wide soil test study in 20 years notes McKenzie. Spring wheat, barley and canola were grown on the sites and their response to phosphate fertilizer measured. The researchers hope to determine the best soil test methods for each crop in different soil zones to help Alberta farmers spend their fertilizer dollar more effectively.

McKenzie describes the first year's results as interesting and successful. "I'm optimistic that after three years of field studies, we will be able to give farmers much better advice on when and how much phosphate fertilizer to apply."

Based on visual observations in June last year, crop response to added phosphate fertilizers was anticipated at a number of sites. However, he says, the high number of responsive sites was greater than anticipated with 78 per cent of wheat sites, 89 per cent of barley sites and 82 per cent of canola sites responding to the added fertilizer. (**Editor's note: See table.**)

McKenzie also notes environmental conditions can play—and did in 1991—a major role in whether or not crops respond to added phosphate fertilizer. "Weather at most test locations was cooler and wetter than normal in late May and through June. Soil phosphorus is less available in cool, wet conditions, so response to a phosphorus fertilizer can be more dramatic. This appears to be the situation in the spring of 1991, so it will be very interesting to see if similar results occur in 1992 and 1993."

McKenzie's research colleagues for the project are: Doug Penney and Elston Solberg, based at Alberta Agriculture's soils branch in Edmonton; Garry Coy, the department's regional soils specialist based in Fairview; and, John Harapiak and Norm Flore of Westco Fertilizers Ltd. of Calgary.

In 1991 the project received over $100,000 in funding. Contributors were the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute, the Western Grains Research Foundation, the Alberta Canola Producers Commission, Sherritt Gordon, Esso and Cominco. "The support has returned again in 1992 with the exception of Esso," says McKenzie.

Contact: Dr. Ross McKenzie
381-5126

Table 1. Summary of responsive, marginally responsive and non responsive sites by soil zone.

Crop	Type of Response*	Brown	Dark Brown	Thin Black	Black	Gray Wooded (Central)	Gray Wooded (Peace R)	Total Sites
Wheat	Response	3	6	5	5	2	4	25
	Mar. resp.	1	4	3	0	2	2	12
	No response	2	4	2	2	0	1	11
Barley	Response	3	10	7	5	4	5	34
	Mar. resp.	2	1	3	1	0	2	9
	No response	1	0	1	2	0	0	4
Canola	Response	5	2	3	1	1	5	17
	Mar. resp.	0	6	1	2	3	2	14
	No response	1	3	1	1	0	1	7

*Response - yield increase greater than 5 bu/ac.
Marginal response - yield increase between 2 and 5 bu/ac
No response - less than 2 bu/ac yield increase.

Fact sheet highlights micronutrients

Small but mighty is a description of the role micronutrients such as zinc and copper play in successful crop production.

A new Alberta Agriculture fact sheet, "Micronutrient Requirements of Crops" (Agdex 531-1) describes these essential elements of boron, chlorine, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum and zinc.

"The fact sheet details where potential micronutrient deficient soils may occur in Alberta and deficiency symptoms in crops," says Ross McKenzie, the fact sheet's author and a Lethbridge-based soil fertility specialist.

The necessity of micronutrients in crop production has long been recognized he notes. Micronutrient levels will also gradually decline in soils as cropping continues. Zinc deficiencies in irrigated beans in southern Alberta were identified in the early 1980s. Research by Alberta Agriculture and Agriculture Canada have also shown copper fertilizer as necessary for wheat grown on some Black and Grey-Black soils in central Alberta. Up to one million acres in central Alberta may be copper deficient.

But, McKenzie adds, it's important to keep the need for micronutrient fertilizers in perspective. "Soils and crops in Alberta that require micronutrient fertilizers are the exception, not the rule. Care must be taken not to promote them beyond their significance."

McKenzie advises farmers who are concerned about micronutrient deficiencies to check crops for specific symptoms. They should also take separate soil samples from both affected areas and unaffected areas for complete analysis. He also recommends sending plant tissue samples from affected and unaffected areas for micronutrient analysis. Because micronutrient fertilizers are expensive, if the analyses indicate a deficiency, try test strips before applying the fertilizer to an entire field. Test strips should be carefully marked out for visual and quality comparisons.

The micronutrients fact sheet is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or by writing Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Dr. Ross McKenzie
381-5126

Check wheat fields for Russian wheat aphids

Russian wheat aphids have overwintered in southern Alberta, so farmers are advised to check their wheat fields for the pest.

Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge reported finding aphids in many winter wheat fields during March surveys. "Although there is still the possibility that cold weather could reduce their numbers, it appears that they have successfully overwintered in southern Alberta," says Rick Butts. He adds it's not known if the overwintering will result in an aphid outbreak in cereals this spring.

"Southern Alberta farmers should be aware of the potential problem and should regularly check their winter wheat fields in particular," says the Brooks-based Jim Jones, an Alberta Agriculture entomologist. "But we're also telling farmers winter wheat might not be the only source of aphids as a lot of grass stayed green through the mild winter and might be harboring aphids."

To check fields for aphids, randomly pick 100 plants from a field. Make sure to take plants from as many areas as possible as aphids tend to be in scattered clumps. Each of the 100 plants should be checked for aphids and aphid damage. Damaged plants will have white or yellow streaks running the length of the leaf. If conditions are cold, these symptoms may appear purple. Infested leaves will curl into a hollow tube. Plant growth may also be stunted.

If 10 to 15 plants in the 100-plant sample have aphids, then spraying the crop is advisable. This threshold applies to winter wheat and spring cereals up to the soft dough stage.

"Checking doesn't take much time—about an hour per field—and certainly is worth the effort," says Jones.

Russian wheat aphids were first found in Alberta in July 1988. The pest hasn't overwintered well and damage has been confined to fall-seeded and not spring crops.

Contact: Jim Jones
362-1339

Dual benefits from line drying protective clothing

Line drying protective clothing serves a dual purpose says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"One benefit is that you avoid contaminating your drier with any residues that might remain after washing pesticide soiled clothing," says Bertha Eggertson, provincial clothing and textiles specialist with the home economics branch. "Another plus is that chemical breakdown increases out in the elements when the clothes are line dried."

Eggertson says line drying is becoming a more common practice. In a 1991 farmer survey, 30 per cent of respondents said they line dried protective clothing used for pesticide application. "This is twice as many families as we had in our 1984 survey, but the number is still too low," she notes.

Laundry practices are the final link in farm pesticide safety says Eggertson. "Protective clothing should be washed daily after use. Exposure is reduced considerably if the clothes are washed every day. It's also easier to remove pesticide residues if the clothing is washed immediately."

Wearing the same clothing for only that use—pesticide application—is also recommended.

Eggertson also notes equipment such as hard hat, rubber boots,respirator and goggles should be washed daily with hot

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soapy water and rinsed. Gloves should be washed inside and outside. They should also be checked for small holes, cracks and discoloration. "Replace gloves with a new pair if there are any signs of degradation," Eggerston adds.

A number of recommendations about protective clothing and laundering practices are available in an Alberta Agriculture publication, "Handling pesticides: Are you protected?" (Homedex 1353-90). The brochures are available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices or by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: *Bertha Eggertson*
427-2412

Southern conservation group starts scholarship

A conservation organization in southeastern Alberta is taking a unique approach to agricultural awareness by sponsoring a scholarship for area high school students.

The South 40 Conservation Association has just established a $500 scholarship open to all grade 11 students in the County of Forty Mile. Stewart Collin, executive secretary of the association, recently announced the scholarship to the Foremost High School grade 11 class.

By offering a project based scholarship to local students, the association feels it's providing an academic challenge as well as fostering agricultural awareness within the county says Collin. "The scholarship is designed to promote three areas. These will be to challenge the student to excel academically, promote agricultural awareness at the school level and promote agriculture in the urban setting."

While the scholarship competition is based on an agricultural related project, winning students aren't required to pursue an agriculture degree or certificate, only to further their education beyond high school. Projects will be judged on academic merit and agricultural relevancy.

Students at four high schools in the County of Forty Mile will be eligible to compete for the scholarship. The schools are in Foremost, Manyberries and Bow Island.

"The South 40 Conservation Association is a group of producers who wish to further their learning and share their experiences of conservation farming," says Collin. The association has four 80-acre plots where they are demonstrating different tillage practices and their effects on crop residue. The plots are now in their third rotation.

National Soil Conservation Week

April 13-19, 1992

Agriculture Canada

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For more information on the scholarship, contact Collin at 867-2396 in Foremost, or Graham Gilchrist, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Foremost at 867-3606.

Contact: *Stewart Collin* *Graham Gilchrist*
867-2396 *867-3606*

Agri-News briefs

Consumer alert for Bench Insurance clients

Albertans who purchased farm insurance from the Bench Insurance Agency should check their policies. Alberta Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the Alberta Insurance Council advise the agency issued over 600 unauthorized insurance policies. Most are farm policies showing the joint insurers as Lloyd's of London and Dominion Insurance Corporation (Note: not Dominion of Canada General Insurance Company.) If these are the insurers shown on a policy, no coverage exists and immediate steps should be taken to arrange appropriate replacement insurance. Bench Insurance Agency Ltd. had offices across Alberta. The Alberta Insurance Council revoked the license of Bench's principal owner, Dwayne Bennett, on March 27. For more information and assistance, contact the nearest regional Consumer and Corporate Affairs office. Regional offices are located in Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Red Deer and Peace River.

Blackleg resistant canola still some years away

Plant breeders are still a few years away from developing good virulent blackleg of canola resistant cultivars say two Alberta Agriculture specialists. So far, some headway has been made with Argentine (Napus) cultivars say Phil Thomas and Ieuan Evans. However, breeders have met with no real success to date with Polish (Rapa) cultivars. All Polish types recommended for Alberta are listed as equally susceptible. A susceptible rating is

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from 59 through 70 per cent stem infection. Only two new release Argentine cultivars—A0337 and Cyclone—are listed as resistant and that resistance is only moderate. "This means serious yield losses of up to 50 per cent could still occur in canola fields with considerable levels of residual infected stubble," says Evans of the crop protection branch. For more information, contact Thomas in Lacombe at 782-4641, or Evans in Edmonton at 427-7098.

Lamb prices continue upward push

Lamb markets are continuing to push higher on seasonal demand and a tighter overall lamb supply picture says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The upward trend in lamb prices in Canada and the United States has continued to strengthen suggesting that the price recovery in lamb markets isn't a temporary phenomenon," says Jo Ann Sandhu. Sandhu says she expects slaughter lamb prices in the $66 to $70/cwt. range through April and slightly lower in May. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Barley acreage predicted down, oats up

Statistics Canada is projecting barley acreage to go down by four per cent in 1992 and oat acreage to increase by 18 per cent. Export opportunities for both feed grains are expected to increase this year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst, but Jo Ann Sandhu notes stocks of both barley and oats will remain relatively tight. "Price expectations at this time are good, but can be influenced by other factors. For example, corn acreage in the U.S. is anticipated to exceed 80 million acres, the highest level since 1985," she says. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Vancouver CWB wheat price average up

Vancouver-based Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) asking prices for #1 CWRS hard red spring wheat have averaged $210 per tonne during the first eight months of the crop year. "This is up 18 per cent from the 1990-91 average," says Jo Ann Sandhu, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Thunder Bay asking prices are up 25 per cent, at $192 per tonne." Sandhu notes that even with favorable weather conditions for world grain production, the 1992-93 world wheat supply demand balance is expected to remain tight and international wheat prices aren't likely to fall. Major factors that will influence prices over the summer include northern hemisphere weather, whether a GATT deal is signed and how the EC chooses to market its inventory. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Soil conservation workshop proceedings available

Proceedings of the 1992 provincial soil conservation workshop and 14th Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) meeting are now available from Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. The proceedings include: the keynote address by Fred Bentley, former University of Alberta agriculture dean, who presented five reasons for drastic changes to agriculture in Alberta and four areas of action; banquet speaker Bob Church on exciting technologies in agriculture; wrap-up speaker Dan Cornish; producers from five soil zones on their conservation systems; and, concurrent session topics including equipment modification, Lethbridge research projects, forage crops in conservation, problem weed control, long term crop rotations, and wildlife habitat and soil conservation. Copies of the proceedings can be obtained by calling Peter Gamache in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Harnessing hazardous wastes video available

Alberta Agriculture has produced a new video on the often-deadly relationship between farm animals and toxic garbage. "Harnessing hazardous wastes" looks at such potentially-fatal refuse as used batteries, greases, antifreezes, windshield washer fluids and treated-seed spills, and discusses ways to protect livestock from them. The video features segments with a pair of livestock producers from the Leduc area as well as with Alberta Agriculture specialists Barry Yaremcio and Roy Smith. "Harnessing Hazardous Wastes" may be borrowed by contacting any Alberta Agriculture district office, or by writing the central Film Library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

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Triggers determine NISA payments for 1991

While Alberta farmers will be receiving Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) forms for 1991 soon, they will have different rules for payouts than during the program's first year.

Farmers who filled out NISA forms for 1990 were mailed 1991 forms last week. Federal officials say this will allow most producers to complete their NISA applications at the same time as their 1991 income tax returns. However, the NISA application deadline is June 30.

One of two criteria, or triggers, will have to be met for farmers to receive NISA payments for 1991. NISA allows farmers to deposit up to two per cent of their eligible net sales into an individualized "savings" account. These deposits are matched by the federal and provincial governments with each contributing half.

During the program's first year of operation the normal withdrawal rules were suspended. For 1991, withdrawals will be triggered by either a stabilization or minimum income mechanism. The stabilization trigger is pulled when a farmer's gross margin—net sales minus eligible expenses—falls below the previous five year average (or portion thereof). The minimum income trigger applies when net income from all sources falls below $10,000. This minimum may be doubled to $20,000 if the farmer is married or supports dependents.

"Both of these triggers apply to a low income year and allow farmers access to their NISA account," says Good. "The stabilization trigger also makes the Schedule D of your application very important," he adds. This schedule, "Retroactive gross margin calculation", is used to determine the gross margin for the 1990 taxation year, the average of 1990 and 1989, and the average of 1988 through 1990.

"By choosing the highest gross margin possible, you may be entitled to the stabilization trigger for 1991, if your 1991 margin was lower than the previous years," he says.

Good says Federal Support Adjustment Measures I (FSAM I) is a continuation of last year's program and is based on one and one half per cent of net eligible sales. Since NISA is the vehicle used to distribute FSAM support, the FSAM I entitlement is exempted from the withdrawal triggers.

To receive the full FSAM I payment, producers should automatically contribute the maximum two per cent of their eligible net sales Good says. For example, on $100,000 of eligible net sales a producer can contribute $2,000 to NISA and earn $2,000 of matching government funds and $1,500 of FSAM I support. If the producer didn't qualify for a triggered NISA payment, the producer's net cost (including the $40 administration fee) for $2,000 in government support would be $540 (producer contribution of $2,000 less $1,500 in FSAM plus $40 administration fee).

In another change, farmers can't use income from prior years to enhance their 1991 eligible net sales. "This was a special incentive only for year one of the program," notes Good.

Grain fed to beef cattle, hogs and sheep still qualify for NISA purposes, however livestock producers and custom feeders will see a new form. Last year there was a separate coefficient form, and this year it will be part of Schedule A.

Two new appendices have been added to the application guide. Appendix A is a commodity list and line code listing the eligible

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NISA commodities and tells where to enter this information on the application form. The second appendix lists all program payments and line codes indicating which qualify for NISA support.

Just over 39,000 Alberta farmers sent in NISA forms for the program's first year. Their average eligible net sales were $56,338. Approximately $108 million in direct benefits will go to Alberta producers from NISA's first year.

Farmers who need more information about NISA or help in completing their forms, can call the NISA toll-free line at 1-800-665-NISA.

Contact: *Merle Good*
556-4237

Analyzing GRIP with a computer

Understanding how the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) works is the key to fine tuning your farming and GRIP decisions says an Alberta Agriculture farm management economist.

"Even though GRIP is a year old, many farmers aren't familiar with important aspects of the program," says Doug Duff of the farm business management branch. "And GRIP does have a role to play in seeding decisions.

"Analyzing GRIP on the individual farm level is necessary for farmers to achieve their best results. Looking at your own farm is important, because the decisions a neighbor makes may not be the same decisions you should make."

"In our consulting work at the farm business management branch, we've found a graphic approach in explaining the program has worked very well," he adds.

To assist in this graphic presentation, the farm business management branch developed a spreadsheet as an educational tool. "It can present an individual farmer's information in a graph and cut the time required to get a feel of how the various components of GRIP work to under 30 minutes," he says. "It's not a substitute for detailed, technical, whole-farm analysis," he cautions.

This spreadsheet program is available for IBM compatibles only and is free of charge to Alberta farmers. Send a blank computer disk—double sided, double density, 3.5 inch or 5.25 inch—to the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0. Please ask for the GRIPANL worksheets.

"The disk you get back will have two versions of the program on it," says Bruce Waldie, farm computer application specialist. One is a compiled version that doesn't require a spreadsheet program. The other is a WK1 file for use with Lotus 123. Back up material on the program will also be provided.

Contact: *Doug Duff* *Bruce Waldie*
556-4240 *556-4240*

Layered is "in" look for pesticide applicators

The layered look has been in and out of the fashion runway spotlight, but whatever the fashion conscious are wearing, multiple layers are **the** style for protective clothing.

"We recommend multiple layers as the best way to protect yourself when handling pesticides," says Bertha Eggertson, Alberta Agriculture provincial clothing and textiles specialist. "The more layers, the more protection you have."

Basic protective clothing includes a long sleeved shirt, full-length trousers, coveralls, unlined nitrile gloves, neoprene overboots or long rubber boots and a wide brimmed hard hat. Coveralls for this basic protection can be cloth or a nonwoven breathable disposal.

Extra protection disposable coveralls with high repellency are made from a nonbreathable fabric. There are two main types. One is a coated disposable with a Saranex® polyethylene coating. Impermeable rainwear is another choice.

Before buying a disposable coverall she suggests reading the label and asking questions. "Make sure the coverall is recommended for the pesticide you intend to use."

Eggertson also reminds farm families disposable coveralls have a limited lifespan and must not be laundered. Replace the disposable when severe pilling (balls of fibre on the surface), rips or holes occur. Nor should the disposables be burned. Instead, they should be placed in a plastic bag and taken to an approved landfill site.

Waterproof aprons are recommended for added protection when a farmer handles concentrated pesticides she adds. Extra protection for handling concentrates and particularly toxic products includes a variety of other safety equipment such as goggles, face shield, ear plugs and respirators.

For more information, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: *Bertha Eggertson*
427-2412

Radley peas for market pigs trial

Field peas for pigs isn't a new idea, but a recent experiment at the University of Alberta's swine research unit tested how pigs performed when fed Radley peas.

"This trial was undertaken to determine the effectiveness of Radley peas as a protein supplement in swine diets," says Sam Jaikaran, an Alberta Agriculture swine nutritionist. "The yellow seeded pea cultivars have been tested extensively and proven to be an excellent source of protein for swine, however there was no Canadian data for green seeded Radley."

Radley peas were tested in grower and finisher diets against a

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soybean meal control and Tipu (yellow seeded) peas. Jaikaran notes pigs grew well and had excellent feed conversion on all treatment diets.

The experimental diets were fed to growing pigs from approximately 22 kg to 55 kg, and to finishing pigs from 55 kg to a market weight of 105 kg. Feed intake, average daily gain, feed conversion and days to market were all measured.

All grower diets contained the same level of protein, 16.8 per cent, and finisher diets were all 15.5 per cent. Lysine levels in the pea diets were calculated to be about 20 per cent higher than in the corresponding soybean meal diet.

"Each of the pea diets was made with or without synthetic methionine," adds Jaikaran. "This was done to determine if pea diets were deficient in this methionine, since peas are known to be low in this amino acid. Both threonine and methionine were added to one Radley diet to more closely approximate an ideal protein pattern.

"We found that added methionine isn't necessary when both growing and finishing phases are considered together. However, it did provide improvement in average daily gain and feed conversion during the growing phase. Use of methionine in high pea diets may just be insurance."

The overall average daily gain over the entire feeding period ranged from 0.79 kg to 0.83 kg. Both the Radley diet and Radley plus methionine diet showed an average daily gain of 0.80 kg. There were no differences in days to market between treatment groups.

Contact: Sam Jaikaran
427-6361

SARDA expanding its borders

As the Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association (SARDA) enters its sixth year of operation, the organization is also expanding out of its original borders.

A producer-driven non-profit organization, SARDA is directed by farmers and extension staff in the Municipal District of Smoky River (Falher and area). With the help of Alberta Agriculture staff in Falher, SARDA has become the largest research and demonstration association in the Peace region.

While producer groups across the province have looked to the successful group for leadership, closer to home producers and agricultural service boards in neighboring areas also indicated their interest in joining SARDA activities.

So, over the past eight months SARDA has undergone some major changes after many meetings with surrounding agricultural service boards, extension staff, provincial Alberta Agriculture staff and producers. As a result, this spring SARDA will start projects in High Prairie (Improvement District #17 central) and Nampa (Improvement District #17 west) districts.

"The producers and local governments from both areas have shown a keen interest in becoming involved with the association and have made a commitment to provide SARDA with their financial support for the next five years," says Hector Goudreau, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Falher.

The expansion will allow SARDA to diversify its agricultural research adds Goudreau and meet the research concerns of a larger number of producers. "This will also provide more local information for extension use," he says.

Calvin Yoder, SARDA's program agrologist, says the organization will become more involved in local applied research to go along with its farm demonstration and extension activities. Currently the group is looking to secure funding from local organizations and government to enhance its ability to conduct applied research projects through increased manpower and the purchase of equipment and land.

Local applied research is beneficial to local farmers. "The information collected from applied research projects can be used with greater confidence by the local extension office in making better recommendations," says Yoder.

Yoder adds he's confident that the expansion will allow SARDA to research more effectively and efficiently. "This is sure to benefit the producers of the southeast Peace."

Some of the projects SARDA plans for 1992 include: variety trials for alfalfa, pulses, wheat, barley and canola; conservation tillage trials; response of alfalfa to liming; chemical control of sclerotinia; chemical control of toadflax; sunola and sun wheat demonstrations; chain diker demonstrations; and, an annual tour.

Goudreau notes about half of SARDA's previous work has been related to soil conservation.

For more information about SARDA or any of its planned projects, the SARDA office can be reached by calling Alberta Agriculture district office in Falher at 837-2211.

Contact: Hector Goudreau Calvin Yoder
837-2211 837-2211

In lean years their soil didn't blow away

As every farmer knows, lean years will come with bad weather or markets, or both. Surviving those years, for some, is a matter of hanging on to a "next year" philosophy. For others, there is comfort in knowing that even with drought and wind, none of their soil will blow away.

George and Kathryn Markle, the 1992 provincial Conservation Farm Family award winners, can look back to the mid 1980s and remember soil did stay on their 2,700 acre farm northeast of Claresholm.

"We didn't lose any land—it didn't blow away," George remembers. Not only that, the Markles came through those drought years without a crop failure.

"The land used to blow. We didn't like that," he says of the now distant past. Continuous cropping, minimum tillage and equipment modification are how the Markles have kept soil on

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their fields.

George has been farming since he left high school about a quarter century ago. Some of the land has been in his family for four generations. Conservation, he says, has been a much more important part of his farming for about the last decade. However, his switch to continuous cropping is relatively recent, coming in 1983.

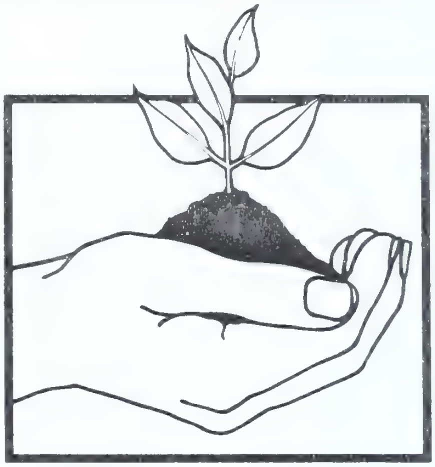
The Markle crop rotation includes mostly wheat and barley with a little canola. Along with continuous cropping, Markle practices minimum tillage. He also emphasizes weed control as an important part of his cropping system. "Weed control is vital. You can't come up short on herbicides and other methods of weed control."

On the heels of Markle's change to continuous cropping came equipment modifications. In 1984, Markle and his father developed their own air drill. "The air drill lent itself more to a conservation approach," he says. He no longer uses that drill, but bought a combination cultivator/airseeder in 1990.

Two years ago the Markles started straight cutting as much of their cereal crops as they could. This saves stubble and keeps it tall for an effective snow trap.

As well, George notes, a major harvest concern is straw management. He doesn't want "gobs and bunches" of straw, but a spread out application to maximize residue and prevent problems when seeding the next spring.

National Soil Conservation Week



April 13-19, 1992

Agriculture Canada

Alberta AGRICULTURE

With his basic soil conservation approach well in hand, Markle is looking to enhance the water holding capability of his soil. With a dryland farm, retaining moisture is critical. He already uses a coil packer to firm up soil and prevent evaporation.

While an advocate of continuous cropping, Markle says he'd never say never to summerfallow. But if he had to, chem fallow would be his choice. "For right now though, we'll stay with continuous cropping," he adds.

Sharing in the family's award are the Markles' two children, Grant, 9, and Laura, 6.

The Conservation Farm Family Award is sponsored by the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) and the Western Producer. It was among the awards presented in January during a provincial soil conservation workshop held in conjunction with the ACTS' annual meeting.

Economic benefits came with family's conservation farming

Sandy, difficult to hold down soil started the Stryker family using soil conservation techniques, methods they've found also bring economic benefits to their Foremost area farm.

"Our initial steps were small—adding shelterbelts, continuous cropping of strips that were blowing and leaving as much crop residue as possible," says Brenda Stryker. She and her husband Danny live six miles north of Foremost with their 13-year-old twin sons, Kent and Trevor.

Danny Stryker has been farming for 20 years, the last 16 with his brother Paul. Their dryland farm includes 2,500 acres scattered throughout the southern half of the County of Forty Mile.

Their first conservation measures kept the soil from eroding and also allowed them to farm more intensively. "We found we could produce greater yields on less land because we were continuous cropping, rather than summerfallowing, whenever moisture allowed," says Brenda.

"Conservation farming has benefited us economically as well as conserving our soil," she adds. "But one thing you can't really measure is our respect for the land. We know that it is up to us to protect what we have and to try to make it better."

As the benefits became clear, the Strykers gradually increased their use of conservation farming methods. For about the last 10 years most of their farming decisions have been made with conservation in mind. "Conservation farming has really become part of our life," says Brenda, and she and Danny have conveyed their conservation commitment to their children. "Because they've grown up in an environment where there is such a strong belief in conservation farming, Kent and Trevor, from a very young age, have realized the importance of keeping your topsoil home."

The transition to conservation farming wasn't quite as simple as it might appear. "Conservation farmers don't always follow the methods used by conventional farmers so they are looked at with skepticism," Brenda explains.

"And when we started, there was very little information to work with. We had to experiment to see what worked best. Like many other conservation farmers, we had to fabricate our own specialty equipment.

"That's very expensive and time-consuming. On top of that, conventional hired men can't always run this unconventional equipment."

But things are improving. Through Danny's involvement in the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS), the Strykers have come to know many other conservation farmers. "Networking lets you learn from others' successes and failures, and they give you support for your ideas," she says. This network is growing larger all the time as more farmers turn to conservation and as new groups, such as the Conservation 2000 clubs, develop.

"I think conservation farming is becoming more acceptable because a few farm families were willing to risk their reputations to prove that conservation farming works and that it's essential to

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protect the land," she adds.

Like many conservation farm families, the Strykers have worked hard to change attitudes. The whole family has become involved in promoting conservation farming. Danny and Paul belong to various conservation clubs and have co-operated with researchers on test plots for conservation studies. Brenda is a member of the Soil Conservation and Agriculture Awareness Committee in the County of Forty Mile. As well, she recently introduced a soil conservation project to the local 4-H club. Her boys belong to the club and are taking part in the project.

"I'd like to make every club member aware of soil conservation problems and possible solutions," says Brenda. "These children need information now if we hope to protect our future."

Over the years the Stryker family has developed a deep appreciation for the land she adds. "Our first small efforts have grown into a strong commitment to return the land in much better shape than we found it. I believe this must be our commitment as farmers."

Agri-News briefs

Moving average prices set for 1992-93 GRIP

The new indexed moving average prices (IMAPs) for the 1992-93 Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) were announced April 1 by federal Agriculture Minister Bill McKnight and Shirley McClellan, Alberta associate minister of agriculture and minister for rural development. Provinces will now be able to finalize GRIP premium rates for the coming crop year. The federal and provincial agriculture ministers also agreed to amend the GRIP agreement to clarify the IMAP provision. IMAPs for 1992-93 will use the 15-year period ending with 1989-90. Some of the new IMAPs are: $4.08/bu. for 2CWRS wheat; $2.10/bu. for 1CW barley; $1.37/bu. for 3CW oats; $6.37/bu. for 1CAN canola; and, $5.26/bu. for peas. For more information, contact Les Lyster in Edmonton at 427-7312.

Second select horse sale May 2 & 3 at Spruce Meadows

There's a horse for everyone as prospective horse buyers are offered selection and soundness at the second annual select all-breeds sale at Spruce Meadows May 2 and 3. The four day event also includes two days of previewing and demonstrations for buyers on April 31 and May 1. The Saturday afternoon sale includes Quarter horses, Paints and Appaloosas. In the sales ring on Sunday are Arabians, Morgans and Sport horses. A limited number of sale catalogues are available from Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650 and in Edmonton at 427-6361. Sale catalogues are also available from Spruce Meadows in Calgary by calling 254-3200.

Early registration for Dairy Day May 15

May 15 is the early registration deadline for the University of Alberta's "Dairy day" on May 28. The open house includes research demonstrations, lunch and discussion panels. Research posters will include more than 20 dairy related topics. The half hour discussion panels will examine: nutrition and management; forages; reproduction; and, international trade and the dairy industry. Each panel will feature a mix of university, industry, producer and extension representatives. Tours of the University of Alberta dairy unit and Alberta Agriculture's milk testing lab and veterinary lab will also be available. Lunch and GST are included in the early registration fee of $20. The cost is $27 per person at the door. For more information, contact John Kennelly at 492-2133.

ACC offers new market information service

The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) has introduced a new market information service providing more up-to-date market price information for the province's cattle producers. Slaughter and feeder information based on regional market trade across Alberta will be offered 24 hours a day. Morning and afternoon updates will be featured on weekdays with a weekend market wrap-up. The slaughter cattle information number is 274-4340, and the feeder cattle information number is 274-4345. This new service replaces ACC's participation in the Agri-Net Market Information Service. The ACC has been offering market information to producers for over 10 years. For more information, contact Gordon Mitchell in Calgary at 275-4400.

Plant sweetpeas at the end of April

The end of April is the optimal time to plant sweetpeas says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist. "Sweetpeas are tolerant of cool temperatures, so an early start will mean earlier flowers," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. Sweetpeas can also be started as bedding plants in mid-April. North notes that new dwarf varieties as well as the traditional vine varieties are available. Vine varieties require a trellis to climb, the short dwarf varieties don't and can be part of an open flower bed. Bijou is good for containers, beds or borders. Snoopea is also a dwarf type suitable for flower beds. Seeds are usually planted one inch deep in a sunny location. Seeds can be soaked overnight. "Check the package for directions," she notes. For more information, contact North at 422-1789.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

April 20, 1992

Site preparation, seedling care keys to shelterbelt success

The seeds for a successful shelterbelt come before tree seedlings are planted says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"We're learning more and more about the benefits of shelterbelts, especially for soil conservation. But this tool won't work for you, unless you get the right start," says Brendan Casement, provincial shelterbelt specialist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. That right start includes site preparation and seedling care before and after planting.

While shelterbelts can be planted between late April and early June in Alberta, site preparation comes before the planting. Moisture accumulation, especially in drier areas, and weed control are two major priorities in site preparation.

The recommended procedure is summerfallowing a planting strip—about two to three metres wide—the year before planting seedlings. Trees should be planted into summerfallowed land, not into unworked stubble and never into sod or newly broken sod says Casement.

Weed control the year before is also critical. "If you don't eliminate those weeds, you give yourself an almost impossible task of trying to keep perennial grasses and weeds such as sow thistle and Canada thistle under control," Casement says. He recommends glyphosates (Roundup, Laredo or Wrangler) or amitrole (Amitrol-T) and cultivation for weed eradication.

The spring you plant the seedlings, cultivate the planting strip to kill existing weeds and apply trifluralin (Treflan 545 EC, Rival 500 EC or Triflurex EC) immediately before—or up to three weeks before—planting the seedlings. This pre-emergent herbicide controls annual grasses, purslane, lamb's-quarters, redroot pigweed, chickweed and wild buckwheat as they germinate.

Trifluralin, however, doesn't control plants in the mustard family including stinkweed, flixweed and shepherd's-purse. These weeds can be controlled after the seedlings have been planted Casement says.

He recommends incorporating the herbicide into the soil with a rototiller, tandem disc, disker or vibrashank cultivator. "And always follow the label recommendations for the application rate," he adds.

Soil in the shelterbelt strip is ready for planting when it has been well-worked to the proper planting depth and is free of large, dry clods.

Seedlings must be handled tenderly he says. "Tree seedlings are highly perishable, and should be planted as quickly as possible."

If planting is delayed, store seedling bundles in a cool, dark or shady location. The most critical part of their care is not to let the seedlings dry out or leave the roots exposed for more than a couple of minutes.

"While the seedlings may need water, don't sit them in water," he cautions. Moist burlap can be used to keep the plants cool.

If the delay is a week or longer, Casement suggests temporarily heeling-in the seedlings. Dig a V-shaped trench, preferably in the shade, and spread out the seedling bundles. Cover the roots with soil and water occasionally.

Before planting, check the seedling variety with the planting plan. Identify the seedling to ensure the tree is going in its proper shelterbelt row.

Seedlings should be planted at the same depth as they were grown in the nursery to about one centimetre deeper. The

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AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

seedling's stem is an obviously darker color above the level of the nursery's soil surface he notes. Shallow planting will cause the roots to dry out. and planting too deep can cause suffocation. Trees shipped with containerized roots, such as Siberian larch, should be planted so the top of the peat plug isn't exposed to air, or they will dry out quickly.

Seedlings should be watered immediately after planting, even if the soil is moist he adds.

For more information on field shelterbelts, contact Casement in Edmonton at 422-1789, John Timmermans in Airdrie at 948-8539, or any Alberta Agriculture district office or municipal agricultural fieldman.

Contact: Brendan Casement
422-1789

Manure has value

With inefficient manure management some livestock farmers miss an opportunity to improve their farms' productivity says a regional soil conservation specialist.

"In other industries by-products are profit-makers, and it's true that any efficiently managed production unit doesn't miss the opportunity to salvage what it can from the by-products of its primary production," says the Barrhead-based Wilf Cody. "Unfortunately, many livestock farmers miss the opportunity to improve their profits by more efficient use of their biggestby-product—manure."

Manure is a resource, not a waste product he adds. Often manure is simply "gotten rid of", and the same piece of ground will be manured year after year for convenience's sake. "But, we get the most benefit from manure applied to the least fertile soils. Those conveniently located fields that always get the manure are quite likely so fertile already that additional manure benefits them very little, while a shot of manure on those out-of-the-way fields might improve productivity quite significantly."

"Those approaches to manure management both represent a missed opportunity to improve productivity of our farms, something research has shown us," Cody says.

Research at the Unversity of Alberta's Breton Plots has dramatically shown the value of manure for sustaining and or improving productivity of grey wooded soils. In the long term crop rotation trials—on the classical plots established in 1930—plots that received relatively light applications of manure have maintained or increased their productivity. Control plots that received no amendments have suffered productivity loss. Plots that received chemical fertilizer applications also suffered a significant loss of productivity over the 60 year history of the trials.

"From other research we can conclude that already fertile land doesn't benefit nearly so much from manure applications as does poorer land," Cody adds. "In other words the less fertile the land, the greater the pay off from manure application.

"None of the research tells us anything most of us didn't already know. However, it should jolt us into thinking about manure management on our livestock farms," he says. "A manure disposal management plan based on field history, the operator's experience and soil testing could go a long way toward improving the efficient use of the manure by-product, and profitability of the whole farm."

Contact: Wilf Cody
674-8256

Prepare to plant your vegetable garden

Preparing your vegetable plot and timing when you plant are both part of a successful garden season says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Good soil is essential for a successful garden," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre. "This may mean adding organic matter and fertilizer before you plant your garden."

At least a half-inch of organic matter should be added to the garden plot every year she says. Sources of organic matter include peat moss, well rotted manure or compost. "If your soil is hard, add two to three inches every year until the soil loosens up," she adds.

North advises gardeners to take soil tests occasionally to check the nutrient, pH and salt levels in their soil. "The soil test recommendations will give you the specifics of any nutrients you may need to add. If you aren't able to take a soil test, then an all-purpose fertilizer such as 16-20-0 can be used," North says.

Another thing to consider when planning the garden is when to plant says North. Among the cool season crops that can be seeded at the end of April or early May are: lettuce, spinach, onions, garlic, beets, carrots and swiss chard. Cole crops from seed such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and radishes can also be planted early.

"However, some vegetables shouldn't be planted too early," she says. "Potatoes should go in around May 10. Vegetables sensitive to cold soil temperatures such as bush beans shouldn't go in until late May. Corn, squash, pumpkin and cucumber should also be planted around May 20."

May 20 is also a "magic" date for transplanting vegetables outdoors. "Cole crop vegetable transplants such as cabbage can go out then. So can peppers and tomatoes, if you protect them with a hot cap, or provide other frost protection," she says.

A hot cap is a transparent paper cap that acts like a small greenhouse. They're made from heavy wax paper, are reinforced with wire and provide two to three degrees of frost protection.

Floating row covers, reemay cloths or garden blankets can also be used for frost protection. The cover traps heat and reduces soil moisture loss, so plants grow well.

This barrier also provides insect protection. "They're great for cole crops in particular, because they prevent root maggot flies

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from laying their eggs in the soil and also cabbage butterflies from getting at the plants," says North.

For more information about preparing a garden seed bed or planting a vegetable garden, contact North in Edmonton at 422-1789.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Morden pink lythrum recommended for gardeners

Among the advice Alberta Agriculture has for gardeners planning to use lythrum is to purchase a specific variety of the ornamental plant.

In the wild, the attractive purple spiked plant is known as purple loosestrife (**lythrum salicaria**) and has been labelled a "beautiful killer" by the Canadian Wildlife Federation. The plant will completely take over a wetland and eliminate all habitat and wildlife.

Earlier this year purple loosestrife was declared a noxious weed in Alberta notes Shaffeek Ali of Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch. However, the regulations don't apply to the perennial ornamental garden plant.

"The ornamental cultivars generally don't produce viable seeds, and if managed properly aren't a serious threat to spread to wetlands," he says. "We are advising gardeners to be cautious about what they buy and to ensure they purchase cultivars that have been propagated vegetatively, and not grown from seed."

Plants propagated from the root stalk are sterile and don't produce seeds. "The prolific seed production of purple loosestrife is one reason it's such a threat," he notes.

Alberta Agriculture is recommending gardeners buy a specific variety of the ornamental lythrum, Morden Pink. "Since different varieties can cross pollinate and produce seeds, we are recommending just one variety," Ali says.

"As well, avoid planting the ornamental variety close to any wetland area," he adds.

Ali also reminds gardeners not to transplant wild loosestrife in their gardens. "And if anyone comes across purple loosestrife they should report it immediately to the crop protection branch in Edmonton." The crop protection branch can be reached in Edmonton at 427-7098 (toll-free through the nearest Alberta Government RITE centre).

Gardeners should also watch their first year plants. "If they look wild, tall and vigorous, take them back to the nursery or destroy them."

Lythrum is a popular perennial with a long bloom season, winter hardiness, distinctive flowers and a lack of serious pest problems.

Last year 15 purple loosestrife sites were identified across the province. "We are able to control small outbreaks," says Ali, "But the best control method is prevention."

Purple loosestrife, is most likely found in a wetland area including sloughs, dugouts and lakes. Loosestrife grows between three and six feet high and has long pink/purple spike flowers from June through September. Highly competitive, seeds germinate quickly once they touch the ground. Some authorities estimate one plant can produce 100,000 seeds annually. The plant isn't native to North America and was introduced from Europe in the 1800s

Contact: Shaffeek Ali
427-7098

Winter injury on spruce trees

Brown needles on your evergreen trees may be a sign of winter injury says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Needles that turn brown are dead and will fall off," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. "Severity of the damage will vary. Some plants may lose all their needles, others may lose just those on the ends of branches or on one side."

Signs of winter injury on spruce are needles turning from green to light tan or reddish brown. Colorado spruce takes on a purplish color. This damage is usually at the ends of branches or on one side. It is caused by desiccation, or drying out, of the foliage.

"Unusually warm temperatures this winter caused the needles to lose moisture. When the ground was still frozen, the roots couldn't replace this moisture and the needles dried out.

"Usually this type of damage is seen more on the south and west side of trees and on evergreens such as junipers and cedars planted on the south and west side of buildings," says North.

There are several ways to deal with winter injured evergreens she says. Water the trees when the ground begins to dry out to prevent further desiccation. Pruning should wait, she cautions, until you are sure which parts of the tree are dead as buds at the end of branches may still be alive. "Even if old needles are dead, trees still might get new growth at the ends of branches," she says. Trees can be lightly fertilized once they begin to show new growth she adds.

For more information about winter injury to evergreen trees, contact North at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton at 422-1789.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Gloves basic protection when handling pesticides

Whether in the field or the laundry room, wearing unlined nitrile gloves is your recommended protection when handling pesticides or pesticide soiled clothing.

"Wearing gloves is one of the most important and basic

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precautions you can take," says Bertha Eggertson, Alberta Agriculture provincial clothing and textiles specialist. "Because the hands account for the greatest percentage of pesticide exposure, protecting your hands is critical. And, how you protect them is also very important."

Protective gloves should be worn when handling, mixing or pouring concentrated pesticides. As well, they should be worn when adjusting spraying equipment and during application if the farmer is directly exposed to spray. For added safety, form a cuff on the glove and wear it under the coverall sleeve. This prevents spills and splashes from running down arms.

"We also recommend whoever handles the pesticide clothing before it's washed to wear nitrile gloves," she adds.

Unlined nitrile gloves are recommended as the best protection she says. These gloves aren't expensive, about $4 per pair and are reusable up to a point. "The investment you make in the right type of gloves certainly is worth it for your health's sake."

While nitrile gloves are readily available, so are a number of other types. Eggertson encourages checking out the material gloves are made from before making a purchase. "If your supplier can't tell you what the glove is made from, insist on checking it out with the manufacturer," she adds.

Cloth and leather gloves must never be used. "They absorb chemicals and then are a continuous source of contamination," she cautions. A number of other types of gloves also aren't recommended for use when working with pesticides. Eggertson says to avoid using latex rubber, natural rubber, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or polyvinyl alcohol (PVA).

"The yellow PVC glove is popular for farm work, but it's a bad choice for working with pesticides because it has a lining. As a general rule, avoid using lined gloves because they're hard to clean," she says.

"We often get questions about using surgical gloves," she adds. "They have limited use for fine adjustments on a sprayer, but aren't suitable for general use as they don't offer sufficient protection."

Taking care of the gloves is also critical. They should be washed before they are taken off, then should be washed inside and out. Check for holes by filling the gloves full of water. Replace gloves immediately when they crack, rip, discolor or have pin holes.

University of Alberta researchers with funding from Alberta Agriculture studied functional fit and comfort of gloves in the late 1980s. "A good fit is important," says Eggertson. "Farmers are more apt to wear gloves if they fit and are comfortable."

For more information on protective clothing, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Bertha Eggertson
427-2412

Agri-News briefs

1992 custom rates survey available

Alberta Agriculture has a guide to help farmers budgeting or setting a custom work or leasing rate. Custom rates for a wide variety of farm work, from tillage to harvesting, are summarized in the "Custom rates survey summary 1992 " (Agdex 825-9). The guide lists common rates for 1991, the range of rates, comparisons to 1990 rates and regional differences. "These 1991 rates are useful information as a guide for custom or leasing rates. They aren't intended for use as recommended or fair rates. They're simply the rates people answering the survey said they were charging for custom work and leasing," says Craig Edwards, a farm economist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds. Surveys were conducted and compiled by Maureen Whitlock of the department's statistics branch. The summary is available at Alberta Agriculture district offices or by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. For more information, contact Edwards at 556-4248 in Olds or David Thacker at 556-4240.

Conservation poster contest nets 777 entries

Urban and rural schools from every corner of the province entered a total of 777 posters in the 1992 soil conservation poster competition. Entries were of an exceptional quality says Barb Shackel, Alberta Agriculture conservation awareness specialist. "They showed the students had a very good understanding of soil conservation and the detrimental effects soil degradation can have on food production." Eric Brandley from Magrath School was the overall winner taking home $50 and an autographed book by conservationist Grant MacEwan. Brandley's poster will also be featured as Alberta's 1992 National Soil Conservation Week poster. Two of the runners-up were also from Magrath School, Karen Kay Leishman and Michael Balderson. The other runner-up was Carmen Blake of Whitecourt Central School. The winners were invited to the Alberta Legislature on April 13. Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan and Brian Hearn, president of the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS), presented the awards. The competition is an annual event sponsored by Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development

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branch and the Ag in the Classroom program, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and ACTS. For more information, contact Barb Shackel in Edmonton at 422-4385

CNE scholarship deadline next month

Past and present Alberta 4-H members who plan to apply for the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) scholarship must have their application in by May 15. Applications must be at Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch in Edmonton by the deadline date. The CNE scholarship is worth $1,000 and also includes a trip to the CNE in Toronto. For more information, contact the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 422-4444.

2nd edition of industry vegetation management available

The Industrial Vegetation Management Association of Alberta (IVMAA) has produced a second edition of its "Industry Standards and Good Practices for Vegetation Management." The book presents nine recommended management principles and corresponding work practices for vegetation managers. These sections include environmentally sound planning, workers protection, careful herbicide selection and handling, and proper clean-up. Recent regulatory changes and revisions requested by readers have been incorporated in the new edition. The first edition of the book was published in May 1990 and was distributed to companies, individual contacts and governments throughout Canada as well as into the U.S. Anyone who purchased the first edition can purchase an update for $32.10. For more information, contact the IVMAA office in Calgary at 253-7700 or write Box 9261, Station F, Calgary, Alberta, T2J 6X9.

Formal presentation of 4-H Premier's Award made

The 1991 4-H Premier's Award winner was formally presented with her award recently at the Legislature. Premier Don Getty made the presentation to Annette Polanski of Thorhild. Polanski and her family also met with Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Minister Shirley McClellan before the award presentation. In turn, she presented the Premier and the ministers with 4-H 75th anniversary pins. Following the award presentation, Polanski was introduced to the Legislative Assembly prior to Question Period. The award is the Alberta 4-H program's highest honor. Winners are chosen each spring at the three-day provincial 4-H selections program. For more information, contact Ted Youck at the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 422-4444.

18th conception to consumer test set to begin

The Canadian Charolais Association is set to start another of its long running conception to consumer (C to C) tests. The 18th test will run from 1992 through 1994. The program is designed to evaluate the genetic performance of beef sires by looking at factors from calving ease to carcass merit of their progeny. "It is truly a test of the sires from the point of conception tracked all the way through to the retail consumer," says Neil Gillies, the association's genetic improvement manager. The program first ran in 1968. Final results from the 1990-92 tested sires will be available soon. For more information, contact Gillies in Calgary at 250-9242.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

April 27, 1992

MAY

Farmers' Markets sign of spring

One of the sure signs of spring in Alberta is Farmer's Markets beginning a new season of operation.

"Just more than a dozen of the markets operate year round," says Alberta Agriculture's Simone Demers Collins. "The rest of the 106 approved markets operate seasonally and usually start in the spring." These markets are found throughout the province from Manning in the north to Milk River in the south and from Lloydminster in the east to Hinton in the west.

"Bedding plants are a popular item at the spring markets with vegetables and fruits coming into the forefront later in the summer," she adds.

Demers Collins says Farmers' Markets offer consumers a unique opportunity to talk directly with the person who has made, baked or grown a product. "This face-to-face discussion is a rare advantage in today's global marketplace, so people who shop at Farmers' Markets should really take the time to ask questions and find out more about what they're buying. They'll get answers, because the vendors are very proud of their products."

Among the advantages Farmers' Markets offer are freshness, traditional and unusual products. "Products run the range from garden fresh vegetables, to homemade apple pie, to entrepreneurs testing out something new," she says.

Demers Collins notes each of the approved markets must meet health requirements and all have food establishment permits.

Alberta Agriculture has recently published the 1992 listing of Farmers' Markets. These guides with locations, dates and hours will be available at all of the markets as well as through tourist associations across the province.

Farmers' Markets open year-round include Athabasca, Bonnyville, Camrose, Edmonton City, Old Strathcona (Edmonton), Edson, Fairview, Grande Prairie,Innisfree, Leduc, St. Albert (Village Tree Mall), Vegreville, Vermilion and Webster.

Contact: *Simone Demers Collins*
427-7366

TEAMS goes to work for Alberta Made

The team effort to promote Alberta Made products will continue with help from a special "team".

In the recent provincial budget, almost $900,000 was earmarked for "To Expand Alberta's Market Share" (TEAMS), a long-term funding program for the Alberta Food Processor's Association (AFPA). The AFPA has represented the province's food processors for 17 years.

"TEAMS is following two highly successful predecessors," says Dennis Glover, director of Alberta Agriculture's processing services division. The last was the three-year "Opportunity isnow" (OPIN), and the first was the "Strategy to increase market share" (SIMS). Like the first two programs, TEAMS is designed to assist Alberta food and beverage processors in promoting and marketing their Alberta Made products.

Alberta's $5 billion food and beverage sector, the province's

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

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largest manufacturing industry, directly employs 17,000 people and creates many more jobs in related sectors such as supply and distribution. "TEAMS proposes to better those numbers through a series of 10 projects," says Glover.

Those projects will include: multi-company, joint marketing ventures; new product development and promotion; in-store demonstrations; rural marketing and retail identification of rural processors; food-service promotion; trade show participation; Alberta Liquor Control Board (ALCB) cross promotion; and, food service education.

Glover says AFPA, with Alberta Agriculture's assistance, has helped increase awareness and market share of Alberta Made products across the province and Western Canada. In the past six years Alberta's market share in 15 food and beverage product categories has grown from 27.6 per cent to 31.2 per cent. "This represents additional sales of $264 million," he says.

Contact: Ron Pettitt
427-7325

Rat control program continues

When Albertans boast their province is "rat free", it's not so much bragging, but recognizes over 40 years of successfully controlling one of the most destructive creatures known to man.

In 1991, in the 41st year of the provincial rat control program, a six-man team of rat control officers uncovered and destroyed 16 Norway rat infestations in the province. "That made the 41st year one of the best on record, in terms of fewest infestations," says John Bourne, Alberta Agriculture's northeast regional supervisor of problem wildlife.

The primary focus of the control program is a 18 km wide, 600 km long rat control zone along the Alberta-Saskatchewan border. Last year approximately 8,000 inspections for rats were conducted at 3,500 different locations in the control area. All the 1991 infestations were within 16 km of the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, which is also exceptional he says.

"Because Norway rats rarely invade the province beyond the rat control zone, Alberta is considered to be rat-free," he says. "For that reason, Albertans don't even known what a rat looks like and hopefully will never see a live one."

To accomplish this feat wasn't an accident he adds, starting with the establishment of a long term rat control strategy when Norway rats first appeared at our border in the early 1950s, to the continued joint efforts of Alberta Agriculture and municipalities along the province's eastern border.

For example, the County of Vermilion River, the largest municipality in the control zone, carried out an extensive pre-baiting program two years ago. Today, says Bourne, infestations in the county are down by half. As well, across the province last year approximately 27,000 units of rat bait were set out by farmers or rat control inspectors.

Norway rats destroy and contaminate food, spread disease organisms to livestock, pets and humans, and weaken building foundations. Norway rats aren't native to North America. They were introduced to the east coast around 1775 and have spread slowly westward.

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Spring is gopher control time

The bottom line for field rodent control is to do it in the spring says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"About this time of year, farmers take a keen interest in dealing with ground squirrels—often called gophers—and pocket gophers—often called moles," says John Bourne, northeast regional supervisor of problem wildlife.

"Both of these animals are easy to locate in the field during early spring, the best time to take action," he adds. Bourne says farmers who wait until summer to deal with rodents are often discouraged by their control results. "Get bait out to these pesky animals as early as possible before green-up when competition with new vegetation growth makes baiting much more competitive."

The best ground squirrel control is early application of an approved and properly prepared food bait. "Ideally rodenticides should go out when the adults start to get active in March. For every female removed, six to eight less animals will have to be removed later in the year," he says.

Although strychnine (two per cent) is still available for ground squirrels, anticoagulants appear to more effective. "Anticoagulant baits are more readily accepted by ground squirrels, have fewer restrictions on their use and are safer to non-targets such as pets and humans," says Bourne.

For example, "Liquid lightning" anticoagulant mixed with a clean, hulless cereal (according to label instructions) will effectively remove ground squirrels. Its active ingredient, cholorphacinone, causes the rodent to die from painless internal bleeding.

Trapping, shooting, drowning and other control methods are alternatives he says, but all have limited application.

With their unique burrowing behavior pocket gophers can be trapped or poisoned. "No matter the size of the area involved, pocket gophers can be trapped with a special device set at the burrow plug, or runway, or poisoned by introducing bait into the runway," he says.

Strychnine (five per cent) is still registered for gophers, but a clean hulless cereal must be used and spoon-fed into each gopher runway.

This means opening the run with a spade or garden trowel, placing the bait and **carefully** replacing the sod back into place says Bourne. "This is where most applicators fail. Most bait gets covered up or ignored by the gopher because of improper placement and consequently isn't eaten by the gopher," he adds.

The soil or sod clump must be replaced accurately and precisely

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so air and light aren't allowed into the runway. Otherwise the gopher will cover the bait with soil it moves along the runway to repair the "opening" in its runway.

A prepared strychnine bait is available for gophers. It can be applied with either a handheld dispenser or the Elston gopher burrow builder.

Bourne says a variety of traps all perform fairly well. The best type, he notes, are those that can be set above ground.

For more information on gopher or other rodent control, contact you local Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist or agricultural fieldman.

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Rabies control Alberta success story

The word "rabies" conjures high drama and danger to most people, but its threat is well under control in Alberta.

"Alberta Agriculture's rabies vector control program is a success story very similar to rat control, and is based on controlling the main rabies carrier, skunks," says Eric Hutchings, regional problem wildlife supervisor in Lethbridge.

Skunk rabies is endemic throughout most of Saskatchewan and Montana, but is isolated to southern areas in Alberta. In 1990 only two municipalities in Alberta had skunk rabies diagnosed—the Municipality of Cardston and the County of Warner. Other municipalities commonly prone to skunk rabies are the counties of 40 Mile and Newell and the Municipal District of Cypress.

Alberta Agriculture problem wildlife and pest control staff are responsible for conducting and maintaining the skunk removal program within the rabies vector control zones. Control is accomplished by systematic skunk population reductions along the Saskatchewan and Montana borders as well as in areas where rabies have been previously diagnosed in skunks and domestic animals. When skunk rabies is identified outside the control zones, skunk depopulations are carried out within a five kilometre radius of all positive sites. As skunks are generally beneficial by consuming rodents and insects, population reduction is confined to the border control zones and areas where rabid skunks are diagnosed.

The skunk control buffer zone between Alberta and Saskatchewan is one of the ways Alberta has achieved an effective rabies control program since 1971. "By comparing the number of skunk and domestic rabies cases here and in the neighbouring province and state with relatively no control programs, you can see how well we're doing," says Hutchings.

"Since rabies is spread from one animal to another by direct contact, reducing the skunk population density cuts down contact between rabid skunks and other skunks or animals to a point where rabies is no longer transmitted," Hutchings says.

Pet vaccination is also a necessary part of the rabies control program. "We recommend Albertans should vaccinate their cats and dogs against rabies," he says.

Collection and prompt submission of specimens for rabies diagnosis is vital in determining how widespread rabies may be notes Hutchings. Whenever possible, all skunks from the control program are submitted for rabies analysis to the Animal Disease Research Institute (ADRI) in Lethbridge

"All animals suspected of carrying rabies and coming into contact with humans, domestic animals or pets **must** be reported immediately to the nearest available federal veterinarian," he adds.

Hutchings also reminds the public that Alberta Agriculture personnel don't remove "nuisance" skunks for land and home owners outside of rabies vector control zones. Live traps may be loaned, if they aren't required for rabies control programs.

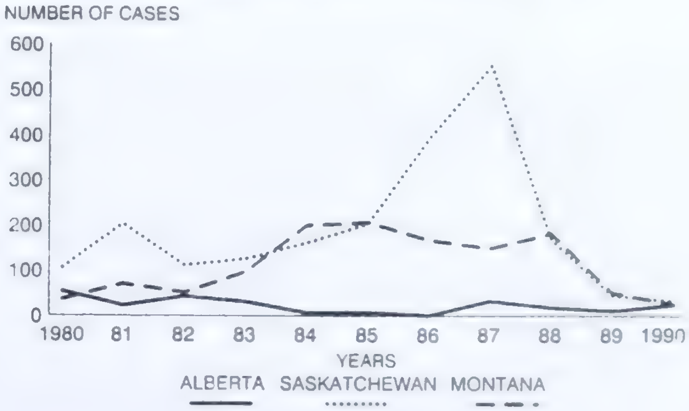
Bats are also rabies carriers in Alberta he adds. "Usually the infected bat is on its summer-fall migration and can't be traced to a bat colony. Again, if there's any human or animal contact, immediately contact a federal veterinarian."

Problem wildlife staff and pest control officers will help collect bats exhibiting symptoms of rabies such as unprovoked attack, inability to fly or being on the ground during daylight hours.

The Alberta Central Rabies Control Committee oversees all rabies control operations in Alberta. This committee includes representatives of Agriculture Canada, Alberta Agriculture, the fish and wildlife division of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, the public health division of Alberta Health, and representatives from the agricultural service boards in municipalities with ongoing rabies control operations.

Contact: Eric Hutchings
381-5574

1980-1990 POSITIVE SKUNK RABIES COMPARISON
Alberta, Saskatchewan & Montana



Raccoons becoming more common in southern Alberta

Although history records them here in the early 1900s, raccoons aren't thought of as a common Alberta mammal. However, south of the TransCanada Highway 1, the raccoon population is abundant.

"Only since the 1980s have raccoon populations increased to where damage is becoming common, particularly south of the South Saskatchewan and Bow Rivers," says Eric Hutchings, Alberta Agriculture regional problem wildlife supervisor based in Lethbridge.

In some parts of North America the raccoon is an economically and recreationally important fur bearing animal. Hunting raccoons is a common sport in Eastern Canada and most of the United States. However, raccoons cause problems through bird depredation, disease transmission and agricultural damage.

Raccoons prey on waterfowl and upland game birds, destroy their nests and feed on both eggs and young birds. They can carry and transmit a number of diseases and parasites including roundworms, lice, sarcoptic mange, canine distemper, leptospirosis, fowl cholera and rabies. No raccoon rabies cases have been recorded in Alberta, but 11 cases have been reported in Saskatchewan and Montana over the last six years.

Aside from disease transmission, the omnivorous raccoon is an agricultural pest in a number of ways. They will prey on domestic fowl, damage gardens and field crops, and consume and contaminate stored grain and feed products.

Hutchings notes a raccoon can bring down turkey sized birds. With their front paw dexterity they can gain access to weakened or open areas of poultry pens. They will also pull down chickens by reaching through the poultry mesh from the outside. Sweet corn is their favorite garden and field crop. Raccoons damage corn by climbing and breaking stalks to reach the ears, pull back the husk and eat part of the cob. As agile climbers raccoons can rip shingles or siding off buildings to reach food sources such as stored feed, seed and livestock supplements. They will also contaminate stored grains with feces and urine.

"These problems will increase as the raccoon population increases," says Hutchings. For now, raccoons haven't been named a nuisance under the Agricultural Pests Act. They are listed as a non-game mammal in the Wildlife Act which means no license is required to hunt them at any time of the year. Landowner permission is required however.

Live traps and exclusion are two methods of dealing with raccoons. Wire mesh or new "egg" traps can be used. "The recently invented egg trap literally catches the raccoon with their hands in the cookie jar. It's also humane," he says.

A number of municipal service boards will loan live traps to their ratepayers free of charge Hutchings adds.

Exclusion or raccoon proofing, on the other hand, is a preventative control technique. For example, store feed in secure containers and completely enclose poultry pens with wire mesh.

"If routine and substantial economic losses occur to your poultry and in garden plots or corn fields, an electric fence may be justified," he says. Minimum protection is a two-wire fence spaced from the group up at intervals of six inches. For maximum protection, Hutchings suggests a three-wire fence spaced from ground level up at four, four and five inches.

While southern Alberta is the most likely place to find raccoons, they have been spotted in such diverse locations as Cold Lake, Valleyview, Edson, Red Deer, Athabasca and Lake Louise.

Raccoons are rarely seen as they are a nocturnal animal. Telltale signs include tracks, plant and fruit damage, fecal dropping and predation marks on poultry.

Contact: Eric Hutchings
381-5574

Agri-News briefs

Renewed support for agriculture in budget

The 1992-93 provincial budget had renewed support for agriculture in Alberta. Allocations to agriculture in the April 13 budget exceeded $730 million, a slight increase over last year. Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley noted to obtain even a modest increase during times of fiscal restraint demonstrates the government's commitment to agriculture and follows in a long tradition of support to Alberta's increasingly dynamic agriculture and food industry. Associate Minister Shirley McClellan indicated spending priorities reflect some important government goals: to help the industry become more efficient and competitive in today's challenging global market-place and to empower producers to take greater charge of their future. The government continued its support to safety net programs including the Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP), the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) and national tripartite stabilization plans. The ministers added during the next fiscal year they hope to resolve some outstanding issues that have stood in the way of further industry development including reform of the Western Grain Stabilization Act. For more information, contact Brad Klak,

Cont'd on page 5

executive assistant to the minister, at 427-2137, or Maureen Osadchuk, executive assistant to the associate minister, at 422-9156.

Green Certificate gears up for 17th year

Alberta Agriculture's Green Certificate Farm Training Program is about to graduate 75 trainees and is preparing to accept another group of apprentices. The uniquely-Alberta, farmer-directed program supports the government's goal of making agriculture more profitable through training and education. "In today's competitive world and with the complexity of farm operations, the agriculture industry needs trained people," says Warren Wismer, head of Alberta Agriculture's agricultural education branch. The Green Certificate program is now in its 17th year. Since 1975 its graduates have filled jobs as farm technicians, herdsmen andmanagers. Farmers helped develop program curriculum for swine, dairy, beef cow-calf and feedlot training.

Co-operating farmer-trainers carry the bulk of on-the-job training through a "learn while your earn" approach. Trainees also attend courses in regional centres, receive performance assessment and finally are certified. The program also includes skills upgrading. Program brochures and applications are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. Or, for more information contact Doug Taylor or Robert Hornbrook in Edmonton at 427-2173.

Sprayer workshop and open house May 28

The Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge will hold a workshop and open house on recent advancements in sprayer and weed control technology. The program begins at 9 a.m. on May 28 and runs through to 4 p.m. Alberta Agriculture and Agriculture Canada staff will present technical sessions on safe pesticide handling, control of problem weeds, application accuracy, reducing herbicide and water rates and controlling spray drift. Indoor and outdoor displays will feature sprayers, sprayer monitors and controllers, agricultural chemicals, spray markers and drift control devices. The centre will display some of its latest research and test equipment including a wind tunnel for drift control work, digital image analysis for droplet measurement, a spectrophotometer for chemical washing of plants and a spray patternator table for nozzle distribution uniformity tests. Equipment manufacturer and agricultural chemical company displays and short presentations will also be part of the open house. Free coffee and doughnuts will be available. For more information, contact Rob Maze in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

Ag economics association meets May 6 & 7

The Alberta Agricultural Economics Association is holding its annual agricultural policy and farm finance outlook conference May 6 and 7 in Red Deer. The conference is of interest to producer groups, business groups, government, university and college instructors and students. Among the agenda topics are: getting a grip on safety nets; an assessment of agri-food export market opportunities in Mexico; alternative fuels; opportunities in rural adjustment; the Canadian Wheat Board's response to changes in markets; and, farm management training. For more information or to pre-register, contact Monica Ulmer at 495-5527, 486-3132 or FAX 495-3324.

Lights, markers, signs needed in moving implements

Alberta farmers are reminded to use proper lights, side markers and other signs when transporting farm equipment on Alberta roads and highways. "The best course of action is to take all the necessary safety precautions," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager. Alberta law requires the lights, markers and signs he adds. Kyeremanteng notes Solicitor General Steve West gave the same reminder to farmers in a recent letter. West's message was: "Adequate identification is important in reducing the likelihood of being involved in a collision." In 1989 there were two fatalities and 18 injury accidents involving farm vehicles or implements on public roads. Last year participating Alberta 4-H clubs sold a flag and light marker to both raise money and safety awareness. Kyeremanteng notes farmers should also take precautions so their implements will fit under power lines when they move equipment. Kyeremanteng can be reached in Edmonton at 427-2186. For more information about regulations for lights, markers and signs when moving farm implements, contact the nearest Alberta Transportation district office.

Coming agricultural events notice

- Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **June, July, August or later in 1992**? Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by May 21, 1992 to:

Agri-News Editor
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in Agri-News The next list will be June 1,1992)

Phone (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

May 4, 1992

Curiosity can kill the cow

A cow's curious nature can be just as deadly as the proverbial cat's says an Alberta Agriculture ruminant nutritionist.

"Cows are curious animals and they are able to locate anything that is a bit different or unusual," says Barry Yaremcio. "This includes fertilizer or treated grain spills that are a hazard to their health."

Cattle will cover the length and width of a pasture looking for specific types of forage. Along the way they could encounter fertilizer or treated grain spills left in a yard or pasture. "Cattle aren't smart enough to know what is harmful to them. A cow will satisfy its curiosity by tasting anything unfamiliar, and it doesn't take very much fertilizer to kill a cow," he says.

Ammonium nitrate (34-0-0) and urea (46-0-0), two of the most common fertilizers used on pastures, are common problems. A 1200 lb. cow can be dead after consuming 1.1 kg of ammonium nitrate or 250 grams of urea. A four litre ice cream pail of fertilizer weighs about two to three kg. "So, if the fertilizer consumed is urea, the four litres of fertilizer could possibly kill eight to 12 animals if the fertilizer is eaten at one feeding," he warns.

Ammonium sulfate fertilizer (34-0-0-14) is the most toxic to cattle. Forty grams of ammonium sulfate can kill a cow.

Yaremcio advises farmers to check for and clean up any spill before letting cows into an area after they spread fertilizer on a pasture or load it in their yard or field.

The same precautions and more apply to treated seed grain he adds. "Animals that consume treated grain are at risk as deaths can occur in a very short period of time, so all spills should be cleaned up immediately."

Any equipment used to handle treated seed must be throughly cleaned before handling any other feed. Small amounts of seed treatment will stick to the sides of the grain box and the flighting of augers. Both must be thoroughly washed and the dried seed treatment removed.

Contact: *Barry Yaremcio*
427-6361

Choosing crop production inputs

Each spring farmers not only face choices of what crops they will seed, but also must pick the kind and amount of crop production inputs they should use.

"Input requirements change from field to field, among crops and from year to year," says Doug Penney, acting head of Alberta Agriculture's soils branch. "Government support programs also affect these decisions, and to make matters more complex, new products come on the market every year," he adds.

New products often claim they enhance crop growth or improve soils. However, some of those products haven't been registered for sale and haven't undergone adequate research and testing. Sale of non-registered products is illegal, but difficult to control he notes.

"We discourage using non-registered products," he says. "But, registration itself isn't a valid reason to use a product."

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Alberta
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Deciding to use a product should first be based on the knowledge the product is safe Penney advises. Secondly, there should be a high probability the product will give a positive economic return that's at least as good, or better, than an alternative. "Unfortunately, in many cases, the information you need to compare alternatives isn't available."

Penney says one example of how to make crop input decisions comes from the many calls the soils branch has received recently about a new seed inoculant. The product is called Provide and was originally known as PB 50. Its active ingredient is a fungus, **pencillium bilaji**. Isolated by researchers at Agriculture Canada in Lethbridge, this fungus was shown to increase phosphorous uptake.

"The product was developed with valid research and testing in Western Canada and is registered for use on wheat. But, the question we're being asked is whether Provide is an equal or better alternative to the farmer's current practice," Penney says.

Penney suggests farmers look at the recommended rate of use, cost and convenience of the particular new product versus its alternatives.

Provide, for example, is recommended as a substitute for a minimum of 10 lb/ac of fertilizer phosphate. In other words, to use Provide plus 10 to 15 lb/ac of phosphate instead of 20 to 30 lb/ac of phosphate fertilizer alone. Numerous field trials have verified similar crop response to the two treatments he says. "Farmers, therefore, can choose between these alternatives on the basis of cost and convenience."

An additional factor to consider is the long term effects of the alternative treatments. "Again, going back to the Provide example, the accumulative effect of using the lower rate of phosphate with Provide compared to the 'normal' rate of fertilizer haven't been determined. Reducing phosphate rates below crop removal—a 40 bu/ac wheat crop removes 24 lb/ac of phosphorous—could result in decreased available soil phosphorous over the long term," Penney says.

These long term consequences point to the necessity of agronomic research he adds. "To make the best choices farmers need access to the best information available. The agronomic research required to obtain this information is an essential part of maintaining an economically viable and sustainable agriculture industry."

Contact: Doug Penney
427-2530

Guardian dogs can protect livestock

An ancient practice is gaining popularity as a way to protect livestock from marauding coyotes and other predators.

Livestock guardian dogs have been used in Europe and Asia for centuries, but weren't embraced in North America until more recently. In the 1970s, after the U.S. banned coyote control poisons, livestock producers took an interest in guard dogs.

"Up to 100 Alberta farmers now use livestock guardian dogs," says Eric Hutchings, Lethbridge regional supervisor of problem wildlife. "Generally the dogs are used to protect sheep, but some also patrol goats, poultry, cattle and game animals."

A successful livestock guardian dog starts its career early. The best success comes from removing the pup from its litter mates at seven to eight weeks of age and placing it directly with the livestock it will be guarding. "This is called bonding and is an integral part of the pup's learning process, particularly in the first six months," says Hutchings.

"The guarding behavior is instinctive," he adds, "The pup merely needs to learn what animals it's expected to guard and where."

Hutchings also warns that the guardian puppy bought to protect livestock should stay with the livestock. "That means not staying on your porch or with your children. It's a working dog, not a pet. At the same time, there needs to be an appropriate level of human contact—a daily visit to the pasture and filling a self feeder for example."

Another major ingredient in a successful livestock guard dog is the time commitment to training and managing the dog he says. "If you don't commit that time, then you could be adding further headaches to your livestock operation. Absentee owners, poor livestock managers and people who over extend the dog's capabilities to include it as the family pet, may find little protection benefit from the dog."

How a dog does its job is different than some might expect. Rarely does a guardian dog attack a coyote. Instead, a livestock guardian dog should regularly patrol its area, scent and mark its territory, investigate disturbances and bark. "Coyotes then usually realize and respect the territory of the much larger canine," says Hutchings.

Great Pyrenees are the most common breed used as a livestock guardian he notes. Other breeds, including Akbash, Anatolian Shepherd, Komondor, Kuvasz, Maremma and various cross-breeds, are also being used successfully. Gender doesn't play a role in guarding success, but it's recommended that all dogs be neutered to reduce wandering.

With over 20 breeders in Alberta, buying a livestock guardian puppy isn't difficult. The average cost for a seven week old pup (from working parents and without papers) is between $250 and $300. Purebred papered stock sells higher at a range between $400 and $800.

"Be aware of special reduced prices for older dogs," he adds. "You might be purchasing someone else's problems."

Mortality in livestock guardian dogs can be a concern Hutchings says. "Dogs get shot, poisoned and can suffer from a number of health disorders. So it's important: to inform your neighbours that a livestock dog is patrolling your pastures; to avoid coyote control poisons; and, to maintain the dog's vaccinations."

Alberta Agriculture has a number of resources available about guard dogs including video tapes, slide tapes, fact sheets and books. For more information contact a regional problem wildlife

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supervisor, the crop protection branch in Edmonton (427-7098) or the beef cattle and sheep branch in Edmonton (427-5083)

Contact: Eric Hutchings
381-5574

Guard donkeys catching on in livestock industry

Guard donkeys are relatively new to the livestock industry in Alberta, but the common burro could become a familiar sight on sheep farms.

"For years sheep operators in North America have known about the protection capabilities of certain Eurasian dog breeds," says John Bourne, Alberta Agriculture problem wildlife supervisor in the northeast region. "Donkeys are much newer on the livestock protection scene, although in the U.S., guard donkeys can be found protecting anything from sheep and goats to cattle, pigs and even poultry."

Last year Alberta Agriculture began a two-year project in co-operation with the sheep industry to evaluate the potential of guard donkeys.

The 10 donkeys in the Alberta project were selected on the basis of their socialization and acceptance to sheep, size, gender, age and general personality. They were placed on 10 sheep farms that had experienced continuous and repeated coyote predation.

Results from the project's first year have shown excellent guarding performance by the donkeys says Bourne. "Of the 10 animals placed with sheep flocks, six haven't had a loss and operators report very good to excellent behavior of the donkeys with the sheep." He adds two of the donkeys weren't able to guard adequately because their placement was inappropriate. The two other donkeys simply weren't cut out to be guarding animals.

"This project has already received a lot of media attention and I've received countless inquiries about guard donkeys for every form of livestock—sheep, goats, cattle and pigs," says the Vermilion-based Bourne. He adds the department hopes to expand the project and place donkeys in a variety of operations to evaluate their use across a broader spectrum of livestock production.

Guard donkeys have several advantages over dogs. "The herbivore donkey lives a similar lifestyle to the livestock, producing a more stable and predictable relationship between the guardian animal and the livestock it's protecting," says Bourne.

Donkeys protect by vision, dogs on the other hand have to patrol and mark their territory. This allows the donkey to spend more time with the flock. Donkeys also have a longer lifespan than dogs. "Guard donkeys can work for 10 years, but the average guard dog lifespan is 30 months," he says.

There is no real difference in guarding intensity and aggression between guard donkeys and dogs he adds, "Both are adequate protectors."

Donkey breeders and owners were the first to pick up on their animal's guard potential notes Bourne. Donkeys have an aggressive intolerance to dogs that threaten their safety. This obvious behavior was easily observed and seized upon by stock operators as a characteristic to use for guarding livestock. So, donkeys were placed with all kinds of livestock to protect them from marauding dogs and other members of the dog family, including coyotes.

Breeders went a step further, selecting donkeys for particular traits—size, personality and reaction to intruding canines—and bred them for livestock guardians. As a result, a basic type of reliable guardian donkey was developed.

Contact: John Bourne
853-8225

Where to find your farm weather forecast

Farmers can dial the Alberta Farm Weather Line or listen to Weatheradio Canada for specialized farm weather forecast information says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"Producers can telephone one of seven regional weather centres for the most current farm weather forecasts available," says Peter Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

Alberta's Farm Weather Line, in it's eighth season of operation, brings farmers across the province up-to-date agricultural weather forecasts. The co-operative service between Alberta Agriculture and Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service, is available on a year-round basis.

In the recorded forecasts farmers hear the same weather information the public hears, such as expected high and low temperatures and possibility of precipitation, but additional information is provided on wind speed and direction, relative humidity and the drying index.

"Farmers say they prefer the detail in the agricultural forecast to the more general public forecast because it gives them better information for planning their work," says Dzikowski.

Forecasts specific to each region are updated four times daily at 5:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. The lines aren't toll-free and long distance charges apply if calls are made from outside the local calling area. The seven Farm Weather Lines are: Grande Prairie, 539-7654; Edmonton, 468-9196; Calgary, 295-1003; Red Deer, 342-7322; Lethbridge, 328-RAIN (7246); Medicine Hat, 526-6224; and, Coronation, 57-TEMPS (578-3677).

Dzikowski says the service is well-used. "In 1991 the service received over 320,000 calls. We've seen a steady increase in this use over the years. In 1990, for example, the total number of calls was about 260,000."

The popularity of the year-round line means farmers may sometimes get a busy signal. Farmers in the Grande Prairie,

Cont'd on page 4

Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge areas have the option of using Weatheradio Canada instead.

Weatheradio Canada is a dedicated VHF-FM radio broadcast system transmitting on a frequency of 162.4, 162.475 or 162.55 megahertz (MHz). The Environment Canada service provides continuous up-to-date weather forecast information directly from the weather office.

"A special Weatheradio receiver, which costs between $60 and $100, or a good quality multi-band radio, is needed to receive the broadcast," Dzikowski points out.

The Weatheradio signal can be received within about 50 to 60 km of Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge. Since transmissions operate by line of sight, reception may be poor in low-lying areas such as river valleys. "If you are considering getting a Weatheradio receiver make sure it works at your location before you buy. If the signal is weak, an external antenna may help," he says.

Dzikowski also recommends buying a receiver with a warning alert feature and a battery back-up power source. Another preferred feature is a switch to select the broadcast frequency. This usually means a crystal controls the frequency and provides better reception than a unit with a dial tuner.

For more information about the Farm Weather Line or Weatheradio Canada, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Sheep industry initiatives announced

The first year of a long-term program aimed at further development of Alberta's sheep industry received a $200,000 allocation in the recent provincial budget.

"Although lamb and wool prices have been low over the last two years, the industry shows potential for growth," says Dennis Glover, director of Alberta Agriculture's processing services division.

"Our provincial industry has a solid base, which includes expertise in both production management and processing facilities," he says. The funding will be used to enhance the genetic base, lamb feedlotting, value-added products and market development.

"In promoting industry development, from producer to processor, Alberta's sheep industry will be in a better position to expand and take advantage of market opportunities," Glover adds.

Canadian sources supply only 30 per cent of the domestic demand for sheep and lamb Glover notes. "This provides a significant opportunity for Canadian producers and processors. Increased consumer awareness regarding the quality of lamb products available in Alberta is essential."

In 1991 farm cash receipts generated by Alberta's 270,000 head sheep industry approached $6 million. Currently most sheep produced in the province are for the meat industry.

Contact: Dennis Glover
427-3166

Dairy Congress tours open to public

This year's "cream of the crop" Alberta Dairy Congress and Holstein Show is extending a special invitation to urban Albertans to come on their Saturday farm tours.

Farm tours have been part of the annual event, but were focused more for other producers. Congress organizers are hoping more urban citizens will come on the 1992 tours of farms in the Leduc area. School tours will also be coming to the first day of the congress.

"With fewer people living on farms or having some connection to agriculture and food production, awareness is our goal," says Roger Andreiuk, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Leduc.

The 1992 congress from June 4 through 6 is the sixth annual. Among its features are a dairy trade show, educational seminars, Holstein show and a forage competition. The event is held at the Black Gold Centre in Leduc.

A number of new activities have been added to this year's congress and the congress itself has been extended to three days from two. An added feature is a provincial Holstein judging school. While the school has been ongoing for more than 20 years, this is the first time it will be held at a public event.

A dairy lane for ladies will make its first appearance in 1992. In conjunction with the ladies' lane, a fashion show and cooking demonstration will be held on June 4.

Three separate educational seminars will look at farm estate and retirement planning, growing healthy forage crops and life after GATT.

Winners of the third annual forage competition will again be showcased at the congress. Over 60 entries from across Alberta were received in hay and silage classes. The top five in each class will be on display.

For more information about the 1992 Alberta Dairy Congress, contact the congress office in Leduc at 986-8108.

Contact: Roger Andreiuk — Iris Yanish
986-8985 — 986-8108

Agri-News briefs

Farmers encouraged to join Great Drug Round-up

Rural Albertans with old veterinary medicines are encouraged to dispose of them during this year's Great Drug Round-up. 1992 marks the first year the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association has been involved in the province wide project that encourages Albertans to bring old medications to local depots for proper disposal. The round-up runs through the month of May. "We're hoping farmers will make a conscious effort to take a look for old medications and clean them out," says Harry Dornn, the association's communications officer. Alberta Agriculture is also encouraging farmers to get involved in the safety and environmental project. "We support this very worthwhile initiative," says Terry Church, head of the department's animal industry division. "Cleaning out old veterinary medications is part of being a responsible producer and we hope all farmers will take this opportunity to safely dispose of any old medications they may have." Solomon Kyeremanteng, Alberta Agriculture's farm safety manager, echoes Church. "This is another way to reduce hazards around the farm, " he says. The association has asked veterinarians to spread the word to their clients. Round-up sites will be publicized in local communities. For more information, contact Dornn in Edmonton at 489-5007.

Unique farm safety centre coming to Raymond

Safety cities aren't a new concept in Alberta. Edmonton, Calgary and Medicine Hat already boast such learning centres. The town of Raymond, southeast of Lethbridge, has plans well underway to construct something more unique—a farm safety centre. "I believe that it will be the first of its kind in the world, a safety learning centre with an agricultural orientation," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager. "It's an important development in terms of injury prevention as well as its eventual impact on health care costs." Raymond's mayor, Ruth Nalder, says its also hoped the learning centre will be a tourist draw in the community. Thecentre will be geared both for student tours as well as adult visitors. Recently the project received $100,000 from the Community Futures Program Society. An estimated 60 per cent of the centre's cost will come from the private agriculture industry. For more information, contact Kyeremanteng in Edmonton at 427-2186, or Nalder in Raymond at 752-3322.

Beekeeper offset program reinstated

A program to offset the cost of sugar for beekeepers has been reinstated. Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Minister Shirley McClellan made the announcement following the recent provincial budget. The Sugar Price Reduction Plan will provide a $4 per 40 kg (88 lb.) of sugar (or equivalent) purchased between June 1, 1991 and May 31, 1992 for winter and spring feeding of bees. Once program details are finalized, application forms will be distributed to registered beekeepers likely early in May. Despite improved honey prices, the commercial beekeeping industry continues to experience economic difficulties from weather problems, low production and escalating costs. Increased over-wintering of bee stocks, in particular, has resulted in higher production costs. For more information, contact Ken Moholitny in Edmonton at 427-9167.

New information line coming

A new toll-free agricultural information line will be up and running in mid-May. Alberta Grain Commission prices and market analysis weekly summaries will be available on the line at first. As well as a toll-free number for Alberta, there will be local Edmonton and area number. Further details will be available in a future Agri-News issue.

Farming for the Future program extended

The Farming for the Future research program has been extended for the 1992-93 fiscal year and granted $5 million from the capital projects division of the Alberta Heritage Savings and Trust Fund. Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan made the announcement following the recent provincial budget. Since 1979 approximately $65 million has been invested in over 1,400 research and on-farm demonstration projects through the program. Scientific and technical information generated by the research has provided invaluable information to Alberta farmers, food processors and consumers. Over the last dozen years the program has helped develop new crop varieties, improved animal disease control, and discovered new food processing techniques, marketing and economic information. A consultant's report suggests that over the next 25 years the aggregate return from the Farming for the Future investment may exceed $900 million. Farming for the Future is administered by the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute. The institute's directors includes producers, agri-business, government and academics. The board grants research funding with assistance from expert committees drawn from the private sector and agri-food research community. For more information, contact Dr. Ralph Christian, executive director of Alberta Agriculture's research division, at 422-1072 in Edmonton.

World Pork Expo June 5-7

The 5th annual World Pork Expo will be held June 5 through 7 in Des Moines, Iowa. Over 100,000 producers, consumers and industry representatives are expected to attend from as many as 60 countries. Exhibits include international pavilions from Canada, Mexico and Denmark and breed shows and sales. For more information, contact the National Pork Producers Council in Des Moines at (515)223-2600.

Women of Unifarm and AWI joint convention

The Women of Unifarm and Alberta Women's Institutes will hold their joint annual convention at Olds College June 9 through 11. Among the agenda topics are community partnerships, disable farming and aging as a family affair. For more information contact Sylvia McKinlay at 469-1254.

Irrigation support reaffirmed

The Alberta Heritage Savings and Trust Fund will provide $30 million for rehabilitation and development of irrigation infrastructure in Alberta's 13 irrigation districts in 1992-93. Two thirds of the funding, $20 million, will go to construction activities. The other $10 million will establish a new endowment fund to fund future construction. As well, the Alberta Private Irrigation Development Association (APIDA) has been extended for three years. It will provide $2.6 million in capital and engineering assistance. Program grants defray engineering costs and up to 50 per cent of capital costs to a maximum of $150 per irrigated acre and $30,000 per farm unit. The APIDA is designed for producers anywhere in Alberta, excluding the 13 irrigation districts, who are bringing new land under irrigation. The program has been stream-lined to provide a one-time grant instead of intermittent payments over a three-year period. Applications will now be accepted for projects to be completed by March 31, 1995. For more information, contact Brian Colgan, director of the irrigation and resource management division, at 422-4596 in Edmonton, or Wally Chinn in Lethbridge at 381-5864.

Register now for 4-H 75th showcase

The Alberta 4-H movement its celebrating its 75th anniversary with a special event on July 31 through August 2 in Calgary. Showcase '92 at Calgary Stampede Park is open to current and former 4-H members and families, as well as sponsors and friends of 4-H. Activities will include livestock shows, a bench show and special entertainment. "All members, leaders and other individuals should register as soon as possible," says Penny Wilkes of Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch. Registration forms are available at all Alberta Agriculture district offices, or by contacting Gail Companion at 652-2872 in High River.

Calgary district office consolidated in Airdrie

On May 1 the Alberta Agriculture district office in Calgary was combined with the Airdrie office. District Agriculturist Brenda Chalmers will now be based out of the Airdrie office at 948-8551.

ERCB

Energy Resources
Conservation Board

640 Fifth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
Canada T2P 3G4

General Bulletin

GB 92-8

TO: All Oil and Gas Operators
All Subsurface Gauge Calibrators

21 May 1992

PRIMARY STANDARD FOR GAUGES USED TO CALIBRATE SUBSURFACE PRESSURE DEVICES

The ERCB has maintained the primary standard dead-weight gauge in Alberta. This primary standard is used for annual calibrations of service company dead-weight gauges which in turn are used to calibrate various downhole measurement devices. After consultation with several service companies and industry operators, it was agreed the primary standard should continue to be maintained by the ERCB.

To offset some of the costs incurred by the ERCB to provide this service at service company locations throughout the province, the following fee schedule for calibrations has been adopted:

Calibration of one dead-weight gauge	-	$500.00
Calibration of additional dead-weight gauges at the same location	-	$ 50.00

The service provided by the ERCB will continue to be calibration only and is not intended to service or repair any equipment.

The schedule will be effective 01 January 1992.

The primary standard will continue to be located in the Edmonton ERCB office. Any questions or concerns regarding this program should be directed to the ERCB's Edmonton office at 427-0200.

Invoicing for this service will be done by the Information Services Section of the ERCB's Calgary office.

W Remmer

W. G. Remmer, P. Eng.
Manager
Field Operations Department

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

May 11, 1992

International wheat prices likely steady

International wheat prices are forecast to remain fairly steady at near present levels, but a number of factors could influence prices says an Alberta Agriculture market economist.

"Weather, the outcome of GATT negotiations and the future of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) could push prices in a different direction," says Gisele Magnusson.

In Canada, prices have increased during the first nine months of the crop year. The average Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) Vancouver asking price has been $212 per tonne, an increase of 19 per cent over 1990-91. In the St. Lawrence, the average CWB asking price has been $194 per tonne, a 26 per cent increase over 1990-91. "April prices were $17 to $20 higher than the average, but were lower than March prices," she says.

The CWB has announced an initial payment adjustment of $8 per tonne for all wheat and durum. This brings the adjusted initial price for #1 CWRS (basis Vancouver) to $109 per tonne and for #1CWAD to $98 per tonne. "This increase still leaves room for a reasonable final payment," Magnusson adds.

The price outlook may make holding old crop stocks into the new crop yearattractive she says. "However, high Canadian stock and production levels make tight quotas in 1992-93 a very real probability. Quotas in the 12 to 15 bushel per quota acre range will make quota management an important part of any marketing plan."

Magnusson also notes the International Wheat Council has reported world wheat production and consumption will be equal in 1992-93. "This suggests ending stock levels similar to those for 1991-92," she says. Production is forecast at 570 million tonnes, a 24 million tonne increase over 1991. Consumption is pegged to equal 1991's 570 million tonnes.

Contact: *Gisele Magnusson*
427-5387

Transition to new beef grading smooth

The Alberta cattle market appears to have adjusted relatively smoothly to the new Canadian beef grading system says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"For the most part cattle buyers and sellers are ignoring the marbling criteria—A, AA, AAA—and are concentrating on the yield designations of A1, A2 and A3," says Ron Gietz. In Alberta, the majority of cattle continue to be sold on a live weight basis.

"As expected the A1 cattle, defined as having a lean meat yield of more than 59 per cent, are commanding a price premium to A2 and A3 cattle. Discounts, so far, are similar to those that existed between the old A grades," he adds. "More feedback from the wholesale beef trade will be necessary before standard differentials between the three yield grades settle into the marketplace."

The new yield classifications are more precise indicators of potential meat yield. In addition to the fat thickness measurement,

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This Week

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Alberta

Agri News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

rib-eye area is also measured.

During the first two weeks of the new system, 61.1 per cent of Alberta A grade cattle graded A1, 30.7 per cent at A2 and 8.1 per cent at A3. The new grading system became effective on April 6.

Gietz forecasts the slaughter cattle market to average $78/cwt. through May for Alberta Direct Sale steers. He expects the prices to move lower through the summer, falling to $73/cwt. through August and September.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

First Alberta Beef Congress next month

Beef production, from fencing and forages to new management techniques and consumer information, will be presented at the first annual program of the Alberta Beef Congress June 16 through 18 in Red Deer.

Designed as a forum for beef producers, particular the cow calf operator, the congress has a strong educational component for both producers and consumers.

"Producers will have the opportunity to rub shoulders with each other and be updated on new production techniques and management methods," says Dale Zobell, Alberta Agriculture regional livestock specialist in Red Deer.

Held at the Westerner Exposition in Red Deer, the congress has three feature presentations as well as six demonstrations for producers. Changing production practices in the '90s will spotlight a panel of innovative cow calf producers who use fall calving, holistic resource management and a bull test station in their operations.

Larry Corah from Kansas State University will speak at sessions on both management and forage opportunities for profit in the '90s. Gary Bradshaw, an Alberta Agriculture family business specialist, will join Corah in the management discussion. Barry Adams, Lethbridge regional range manager for the Alberta public lands branch, will add his expertise to the forage session.

"The demonstrations will include a number of newer technologies producers might have heard about, but never seen," says Zobell. Bloodless castration, non-surgical spaying, breeding soundness evaluation, pelvic measurement and dystocia, fence corners and improving overgrazed pastures will be demonstrated. Three Alberta Agriculture specialists—John Basarab, beef management specialist; Ken Williamson, regional engineering technologist; and, Bjorne Berg, forage and range specialist—will share their expertise in the latter three topics.

A trade show, school tours, livestock show, consumer program, awards, a Canadian Team Cattle Penning Association demonstration and competition, and a variety of social activities including a celebration of beef banquet are also on the congress agenda.

This first beef congress has been endorsed and supported by many sectors including Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC). Ernie Isley, Alberta's agriculture minister, will officially open the congress on June 16. The ACC will hold its semi-annual meeting during the congress and all ACC members from the across the province will receive free admission to the congress.

As well, the Canadian Forage Association will hold its annual directors meeting during the congress and a holistic management resource seminar will be held.

The Alberta Beef Congress is organized by the Alberta Beef Congress Society in conjunction with the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce. For more information on the congress, contact Pat Kennedy in Red Deer at 347-4491 or FAX 343-6188.

Contact: Dale Zobell Pat Kennedy
340-5335 347-4491

Ardrossan 4-Her receives Premiers' Award

An 18-year old high school student from Ardrossan is the 1992 recipient of the Alberta 4-H program's highest honor, the Premiers' Award.

Leanna Eaton was chosen from among 137 of Alberta's top 4-H members during a weekend of personal development group interaction. Delegates participate in activities designed to improve life and leadership skills at the annual provincial 4-H Selections program in Olds.

Eaton says she's excited to be named recipient of the 28th annual award. "It is a great honor to represent Alberta 4-Hers in the 75th anniversary year." Among her other responsibilities she will represent Alberta this July at the Montana 4-H Congress in Bozeman, Montana.

For the last seven years Eaton has been an active member of the Ardrossan Creative Hands 4-H Club. As well as holding executive positions in her club, she has participated in a number of regional and provincial 4-H activities. In addition to 4-H, Eaton is involved in Ukrainian dance, environmental awareness and church youth groups.

She was selected for the award from among nine finalists known as the ambassador group. The 1992 group includes Karen Bussey, Airdrie; Charles Crisp, Monitor; Dixon Hammond, Pincher Creek; Mike Hegland, Wembley; Virginia Holthe, Turin; Josie Kildaw, Lamont; Kyla Makowecki, St. Paul; and, Greg Wedman, Wetaskiwin.

Eaton succeeds Annette Polanski of Thorhild who received the 1991 award. Gary Severtson, MLA for Innisfail, represented Shirley McClellan, associate minister of agriculture and minster responsible for rural development, at the award ceremonies. Severtson congratulated Eaton on behalf of the Premier. The official award presentation will be made later this summer by

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Premier Don Getty.

Trip awards to 66 delegates were announced at the concluding awards breakfast. These 4-H members will represent Alberta at major educational programs and tours throughout Canada and the United States over the next 12 months.

Alberta 4-H members who are 16 years of age and older (as of January 1) can participation at the selections program. Throughout the weekend members are evaluated to determine their eligibility for trip awards. This includes points from their yearly 4-H diaries, a current events/4-H examination, peer evaluation and assessment by leaders of group interaction.

Selections delegates participated in group activities centered around the theme of "tiger stripes and different types".

Organized by Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch, the provincial selections program is sponsored by Agriculture Canada, Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Wheat Pool Ltd. and United Grain Growers.

Contact:	*Leanna Eaton* *998-1574*	*Marguerite Stark* *948-8510*

June good time to seed lawns

Warmer soil and moisture usually make June the best time of the year to seed lawns says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Because the soil is warm and there is usually plenty of rain, this is a good month to put in a lawn, however they can be seeded up to August 31," says Pam North, of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

Before seeding, prepare the seed bed. "If possible have 15 cm of good quality top soil. A 2.5 cm layer of peat moss may be incorporated into the top soil. Don't over apply the peat moss or you'll have a spongy lawn," she says. Weed control is also important, especially of grassy weeds. She recommends cultivating or using herbicides for control before seeding.

Ideally, a soil test should be taken to determine the type and amount of fertilizer to use when seeding. A high phosphorous fertilizer, for example 11-55-0 or 11-51-0, is usually a good choice. Fertilizer can be incorporated into the soil with a rake to a depth of five cm.

What type of seed mix to use for a lawn depends on whether the area is sunny or shady. "In a sunny area, the mix should be 70 to 80 per cent Kentucky bluegrass and 20 to 30 per cent creeping red fescue. Shady locations are better with more creeping red fescue, a mix of 50 to 70 per cent, with the remaining 30 to 50 per cent Kentucky bluegrass," she says.

The soil surface should be packed and levelled to remove hills or depressions before seeding. When grading, the top soil should be level with the sidewalk. Seed can be spread by hand or with a mechanical spreader. To ensure even coverage, sow half the seed over the lawn in one direction and then spread the rest from a different direction. After seeding, rake lightly to cover the seed. The soil must be kept moist until the seed germinates, and may require daily light waterings for three to four weeks.

A new lawn shouldn't have heavy traffic for about two months. Once it grows 7.5 cm tall, it should be cut back to four to five cm Selective herbicides shouldn't be used until the lawn has been mown at least twice.

Contact:	*Pam North* *422-1789*

Entrepreneur presents cheque to research centre

A southern Alberta company expressed its appreciation for the research work done at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks by presenting the center with a $5,000 cheque.

Tom Droog, owner of Alberta Sunflower Seeds based in Bow Valley, made the presentation last month to Ernie Isley, the province's agriculture minister, and Tom Krahn, the center's director.

Droog says his company is proud to give something back to the center whose research has contributed so much to the development of special crops such as sunflower seeds. "Without the Brooks research center, Alberta Sunflower Seeds wouldn't be where it is today," he says.

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley says he was pleased to see the private sector's recognition of the valuable support provided by research generated in the province. "The presentation by Alberta Sunflower Seeds sets an example for private industry; it's an excellent way to acknowledge the center's dedication to conducting high quality research."

Shirley McClellan, the associate agriculture minister whose portfolio includes responsibility for agricultural research, praised the center's staff for their continued efforts that have allowed Alberta producers and processors to diversify their operations.

Tom Krahn, the center's director, says the funds will likely go to further research in special crops.

Contact:	*Tom Krahn* *362-3391*	*Tom Droog* *545-6877*
	Brad Klak *427-2137*	

Agri-News briefs

Resource conservation remains priority in 1992-93

Alberta's recent provincial budget includes $3.2 million to conclude soil conservation activities begun through two federal-provincial agreements. The Canada-Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) and the Canada-Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) will both expire during the current fiscal year. Since their inception, CASCI and CARTT have supported research, planning, demonstration, awareness and promotional activities aimed at improving, understanding and encouraging soil conservation practices on Alberta farms. The province hopes to complete negotiations with the federal government for a new long term agreement this fiscal year. For more information, contact Brian Colgan, director of Alberta Agriculture's irrigation and resource management division, in Edmonton at 422-4596.

Forages get new emphasis

A new initiative in Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division will focus on improving the productivity, quality and marketability of forages through research, technology development and extension. Over the next year Alberta Agriculture will consult with the provincial forage industry to set research and technology development priorities. The forage industry serves the province's livestock industry as well as a growing export market. Forages are also an important tool in soil conservation and sustaining land resources. Alberta's $900 million forage industry includes five million acres of hay production and an estimated 25 million acres of improved pasture and native range. For more information, contact Don Macyk, director of Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division at 427-5341.

Price trends suggest lamb price improvements

Slaughter lamb prices held firm during April at levels significantly higher than last year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Price trends in lamb markets suggest that both slaughter and feeder lamb prices will continue to improve over the long term," says Jo Ann Sandhu. Supplies of slaughter lambs are usually tight in May, June and July, so prices can be expected to remain at current levels or even improve marginally. Sandhu expects Alberta prices to range between $66 and $70/cwt. during May and June, and slightly lower at $65 to $69/cwt in July. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Dropped U.S. bean production good news

A U.S. bean crop about 20 per cent smaller than 1991's should support local prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. U.S. dry edible bean acreage is forecast to drop sharply from 1991's 1.9 million acres. "This would be the smallest seeded area in several years," says Al Dooley. North Dakota and Nebraska, two states that are important competitors with Alberta, are forecast to reduce acreage by 19 and 35 per cent respectively he says. Last year's U.S. bean crop was large and the 1991-92 prices have been at relatively low levels. "Hopefully prices here in 1992-93 will average three or four cents per pound above those of the current crop year," Dooley says. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Pesticide ene field day June 4

A pesticide management and equipment field day will be held at Lakeland College's Vermilion campus on June 4. Activities for "pesticide ene" get underway at 8:30 a.m. and run through 4 p.m. Seminars, field demonstrations and a indoor trade show are all on the agenda. Event sponsors are Alberta Agriculture, Lakeland College, the Vermilion Agriculture Society, the North East Conservation Connection (NECC) and the County of Vermilion River. For more information, call Lakeland College at 853-8444.

Cowboy poetry weekend June 18-21

Pincher Creek will become Canada's cowboy poetry capital again this June for the annual cowboy poetry gathering and western art show. The event, which starts with registration and poetry sessions on June 18, runs through June 21 and is sponsored by the Alberta Cowboy Poetry Association and the Pincher Creek Agricultural Society. This year's gathering theme is "the family farm: staying alive in '92". Over 40 poets from across Western Canada and the U.S. are expected. Friday and Saturday night programs include a chuckwagon style meal, evening program of poets and a wind-up western hoedown. Among the other activities are a Saturday swap session, Sunday cowboy church service, western fashion show, art auction and a rancher's fun rodeo. For general information, call Bev at 628-2115; for information on the cowboy poetry sessions, call Anne at 627-4733; and, for ticket information call Sandra at 637-2359.

Petro-Canada 4-H youth leadership award application deadline June 1

Alberta 4-H members who are applying for the Petro-Canada 4-H youth leadership awards are reminded their essays and 4-H scholarship applications must be at the Alberta Agriculture 4-H branch in Edmonton by June 1, 1992. Four scholarships of $1,000 will be awarded to current Alberta 4-H members for their post secondary education. The general scholarship deadline is July 15. For more information, contact the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Prairie farmers surveyed on well contamination

When Prairie farmers were asked in a March survey whether they were worried about the contamination of well or spring water on their farm, 45 per cent said they were. Twenty-two per cent of the surveyed farmers neither agreed or disagreed with the statement and 32 per cent disagreed. The level of agreement didn't vary by province. Only four per cent of the farmers surveyed claimed their water supply was contaminated. "In comparison to the proportion of farmers actually reporting contaminated water supplies, there is a very high level of concern about contamination," says Olev Wain, executive director of The Dunvegan Group. Wain also notes farmers with oil wells on their property were significantly more likely to say they were worried about water contamination than those without oil wells. The Dunvegan Group surveyed a cross section of 552 Prairie producers during March 1992. A sample this size provides results that are accurate within plus or minus 4.2 percentages points, 19 times out of 20. For more information, contact Wain in Calgary at 237-8721.

World's oldest university comes to Alberta

Alberta's agricultural colleges will be helping a centuries old Egyptian university integrate practical training into their current instruction. Two representatives of Al-Azhar University at Nasr City visited Alberta recently and as a result arrangements are being made for a three-year information and faculty training project between the university and Olds, Fairview, Lakeland and Lethbridge Colleges. The planning and co-ordination aspects of the project are being handled by Olds College. Four Al-Azhar faculty members could travel to Alberta by the fall. Later in the fall, four faculty members from the Alberta colleges will follow-up with a visit to Egypt. For more information, contact Reg Radke, Olds College manager of international education, at 556-8394.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

May 18, 1992

JUN - 8 1992

Spring soil moisture map dry

Soil moisture levels were dry or extremely dry in nearly half of Alberta's agricultural area early this spring, and that provides a uncertain picture for crop prospects in southern and eastern Alberta.

Conditions as surveyed to May 1, showed spring stubble soil moisture levels as low in 42 per cent of the province's agricultural area and very low in seven per cent.

"Soils in the very low category generally have insufficient moisture for seed germination, while soils in the low category have enough moisture for germination, but can't sustain seedling growth without timely and adequate precipitation," says Al Howard, Alberta Agriculture soil moisture specialist.

"This means more annual cropland in eastern and southern Alberta faces a higher risk of crop failure this spring than for the last four springs.

"Early May rains have improved conditions slightly in some areas of the northeast," he adds.

The fall of 1991 was the second driest recorded since provincial moisture surveys began in 1982 he says. "Overwinter conditions were very warm and dry in the south and east, resulting in very little replenishment of soil moisture by spring."

The driest areas include: a zone from Bow Island to Vauxhall and north through Brooks to the Hands Hills, south of Drumheller and Hanna; a zone extending from Elk Point northwest to Lac La Biche; and, three smaller zones near Claresholm, Manyberries and Empress.

Low soil moisture conditions extend from Canmore northeast across the province to Hardisty, then northwest to Fort Assiniboine. "This area of low moisture generally includes all of southern Alberta, a major portion of east central Alberta and all of northeastern Alberta," says Howard.

"Although prospects don't look good in the south and east, the picture is considerably better in west central Alberta and the Peace," Howard adds. Most of west central Alberta and a portion of central Alberta including Red Deer, Sedgewick and Edmonton is in a high soil moisture category. So are small zones near Grande Prairie, Falher and High Level.

While most of the Peace River region generally falls into a medium moisture category, conditions are highly variable within the fields of the central Peace.

Howard notes last spring's early stubble soil moisture conditions were comparably dry. "However, the dry seeding conditions were offset by above normal precipitation during May and June through much of southern and east central Alberta."

Alberta Agriculture produces soil moisture maps every spring and fall. This year's spring map is based on actual sampling of stubble fields between April 1 and April 30, 1992. Analysis of rainfall data and input from regional and district staff provide additional information on local variability and changes in moisture levels between the sampling dates and May 1.

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Warm April not great for farmers

A warm, dry April wasn't what Alberta farmers needed to start this crop year says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"While the weather got farmers on the land early, it didn't bring much needed moisture," says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

Average monthly temperatures were well above normal throughout the province and total precipitation was below normal in the southern half of the province. "This follows a mild and fairly dry winter and fall," he adds.

The 51 weather stations across the province averaged 63.7 mm of precipitation for the month. "This was 28 mm below the long term average," Dzikowski notes.

Peace River and Coronation were two locations that received more precipitation than usual. Peace River recorded 46.5 mm of precipitation during April, 324 per cent of its normal total of 14.3 mm. Coronation received 53 mm, 223 per cent of its normal value.

Claresholm was on the dry side of the precipitation scale. Its 5.6 mm of precipitation during April was only 12 per cent of its long term normal for the month. Lethbridge was also dry receiving 30 per cent of its normal, recording 12.6 mm of precipitation during April.

In general, April was mild with temperatures about one to three degrees above normal. April's average monthly temperature as recorded at the same 51 provincial weather stations was 2.5°C warmer than the 1951 to 1980 normal.

Bow Island recorded the warmest average temperature for the month at 9.3°C. That average was only 2.4° above its normal. Gleichen recorded a monthly mean temperature of 7.8°C, 3.7°above its norm.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Maintain residue to prevent wind erosion next year

Wind erosion had been minimal in 1992 until mid and late April winds whipped through southern Alberta says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

John Timmermans, a soil conservation specialist in Airdrie, says an estimated 1.5 million acres have been eroded by wind this spring. About 100 to 200 thousand of those acres suffered severe damage and lost six mm or more of top soil.

"Many soils are at high risk of further erosion until the new crop again protects the soils, or rainfall improves the surface conditions," Timmermans adds.

Wind erosion occurs when a number of factors combine. When soil is dry, smooth, bare and exposed to erosive winds—often during April, May and early June—many soils will be damaged. All bare soils are not equally susceptible as soil texture and structure vary widely across Alberta. Velocity, extent and duration of winds are also factors in erosion damage.

"For example, last year soils were at very high risk of serious wind erosion damage. Crop yields in 1989 and 1990 were reduced by drought and in turn there wasn't much crop residue to act as protection in summerfallow and stubble fields. Wind erosion, however, was less than I predicted because sustained erosive winds, thankfully, were rare, plus rain started to fall in early May," he says.

Soils most vulnerable to wind erosion are summerfallow fields, fields where residues have been removed by cultivation or burning, and special crop acreage. "By far the largest category of our erodible acreage is summerfallow," he says.

This year a mild winter contributed to wind erosion potential. Surface soils were more exposed to the elements. As well, last year's summerfallow fields were poorly protected because the 1990 crop had low yields because of drought.

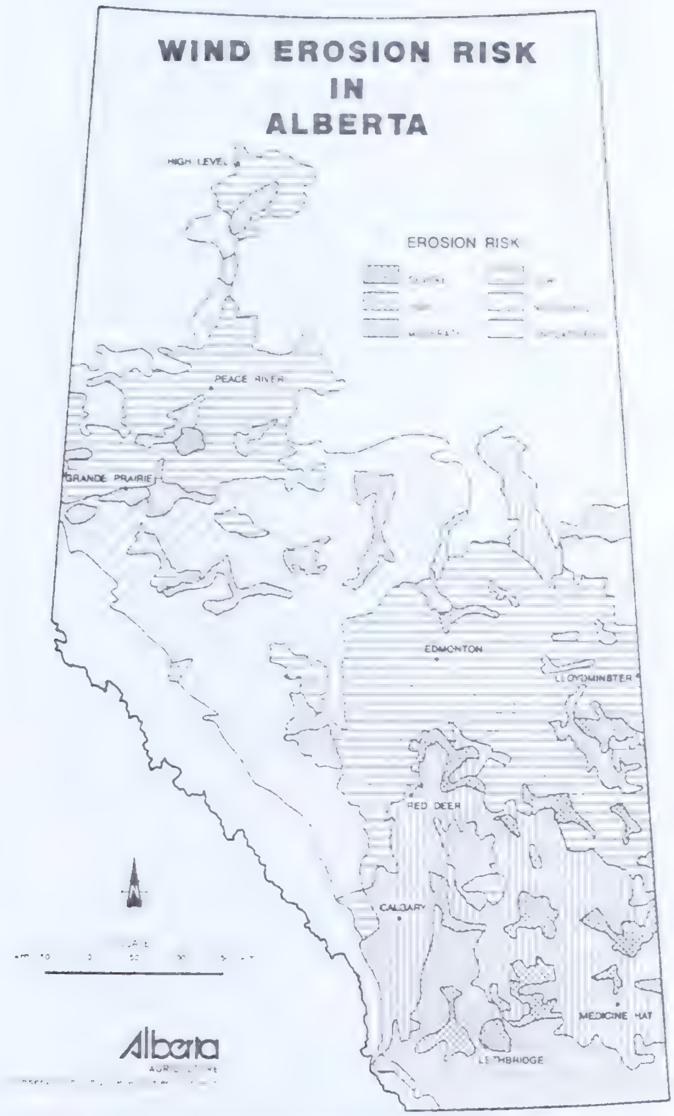
"While there aren't many emergency controls to stop wind erosion, farmers can take steps to reduce the problem next year," says Timmermans. "Because 1991 crop yields were generally higher, residue cover is better than it was a year ago. We must take care of it beginning right now, so there will still be enough residue to protect summerfallow fields a year from now. Tillage that buries residue must be reduced or substituted by chemical weed control to make sure this residue cover is maintained."

Timmermans is emphatic that wind erosion can be prevented. "The notion we have no choice but to suffer wind erosion because that is the nature of farming on the Prairies is not only short sighted, but is also one that can't survive."

Crop production with summerfallow in the rotation is, at best, a soil conservation challenge he adds. "But there are many farmers out there now who have shown it can be done. And if they can maintain crop residues in a system that includes fallow, then surely sufficient residues can be maintained under continuously cropping."

Contact: John Timmermans
948-8539

(Editor's note: See map following page.)



Peace farmers co-operate in backflood project

A successful water management practice in southern Alberta is gaining popularity in the rest of the province.

Spring backflood irrigation allows farmers to make better use of spring snowmelt says Bill MacMillan, Alberta Agriculture regional soil and water conservation engineer based in Fairview. Another advantage for farmers, he adds, is that backflood projects have relatively low development and operation costs.

A simple backflood system involves a dike to hold snowmelt water on a field for seven to 10 days. Water is gradually released through a control structure and field ditches. This controlled release also means less downstream flooding and erosion.

By temporarily retaining snowmelt runoff, spring backflood can increase subsoil moisture levels to a depth of 75 cm (30 in.) or more. As well, because the water is warmer than the frozen soil, flooded soil often thaws more quickly, allowing earlier field operations. A backflooded area, especially on organic soils, can be ready for seeding a week after the water is drained.

To capitalize on those benefits, two neighboring farmers in MacMillan's region are co-operating in a backflood project. Don Pashko and Steve Pain farm east of Nampa in Improvement District 17 (west) and will start construction on their project in June. They hope their project will reduce their risk of drought, plus improve both drainage and field operation efficiency.

Currently Pashko's land experiences flooding early every year. The low lying areas on both fields hold a foot or two of water through most of the year because of poor drainage. On the reminder of Pain's land, water for crop growth is in short supply most years. Sandy loam topsoil holds little soil moisture and dries off quickly. Heavier textured clay subsoils have the potential to store moisture, but runoff usually occurs before water can soak into this layer.

Pashko says he looks at the project as an investment for the future. "It seems to be getting drier around these parts and total drainage would run me into the same situation that Steve has now. With backflooding I can get water off my land in time for seeding and still protect myself from drought by saving moisture in the soil where the crops can get at it," he says.

Pain has similar feelings. His land is generally too dry for good crops most years and low lying areas with poor drainage are trouble spots both during seeding and harvesting. "With the backflood system, I can manage both of my water problems," he says. "When water is available, I'll hold it back and let it get into the soil profile where it can be used later for crop production.

"Also, a good drainage system is a critical part of the backflood scheme. This allows me to drain off the surface water I don't want after the backflood is over."

MacMillan notes the joint project will take a lot of co-operation. Pashko and Pain will need an irrigation schedule to allow one or both of them to irrigate each year. They must also agree on an operations schedule and runoff volumes for the 74 acres.

The backflood project also has spinoff benefits MacMillan adds. Flow regulation will minimize downstream flooding and erosion. Wildlife will also benefit. The backflood area provides temporary staging and mating waters for waterfowl enhancing the effectiveness of a nearby Ducks Unlimited project.

Backflooding requires a fairly level field with enough slope to provide adequate drainage after the flood water is released. This system works best on soils with good moisture-holding capacity. Spring backflooding isn't recommended for soils with high concentrations of soluble salts or sodium, or for solonetzic soils.

For more information on spring backflood irrigation, contact your regional or district Alberta Agriculture office, or municipal agricultural fieldman.

Contact: Bill MacMillan
835-2291

Video's message to stop sclerotinia

Canola producers should take the time to check for a disease that could rob them of yield and infect their fields for years.

Under certain environmental and field conditions, sclerotinia stem rot of canola can cause yield losses of over 50 per cent. In the latest effort to spread the word about sclerotinia, Alberta Agriculture has produced a new video called, "Stop Sclerotinia" (631-1 VT).

The nine minute video, available at all Alberta Agriculture district video libraries, details what producers should look for before the disease hits and after it does.

"Tom Schuler, the Red Deer based regional crop production specialist, is featured in the video. He does field walk throughs showing actual sclerotinia damage," says Rob Thirlwell, the Alberta Agriculture producer of the video.

Schuler suggests farmers use an Alberta Agriculture checklist to help them determine if their canola fields are at risk. The checklist should be filled out when the crop is in first flower, when 75 per cent of plants have three open flowers or about one per cent of flower buds have opened. Farmers should ask their local Alberta Agriculture district office for the checklist.

"The checklist can tell you that you might have already had sclerotinia in previous years, but it went undetected," says Schuler. The disease can survive in the soil for four to five years, or more, in the form of small black hard bodies called sclerotia. With suitable temperature, humidity and light conditions, these sclerotia germinate producing very tiny mushrooms.

The golf-tee shaped mushrooms are called apothecia and are the first signs of the disease. "They are very difficult to see unless you do a close field inspection, so this first sign can often be missed," he says.

Apothecia produce thousands of tiny air-borne spores which can be carried several kilometres by the wind into near-by fields. These spores can readily infect flower petals. Infected petals fall on to the canola plant leaves and the fungus enters the healthy plant.

While apothecia can be produced from early June to late September, the critical period for infection is during the plant's flowering stage. Wet weather at this time increases the probability of disease development. As well, heavy vigorous stands of canola are more prone to infection as the dense canopy provides a suitable humid environment for fungal growth.

Other signs of sclerotinia stem rot are light brown discoloration on stems, branches and pods; wilting plants; early ripening of infected plants; and, white stems on swathed stubble.

Spraying is the best active defense if sclerotinia is widespread. However, it is expensive and the best defense is prevention Schuler says.

Preventative measures include four year crop rotations, using clean seed and controlling volunteer canola.

"Restricting the spread of sclerotinia through checking fields and controlling the disease make good economic sense. It's vital all producers work together to stop sclerotinia," he says.

Canola is one of several crops affected by the sclerotinia fungus. Legumes such as field peas, alfalfa and clover, and common weeds such as thistles and wild mustard are among the 360 plant species sclerotinia stem rot can infect.

For more information about sclerotinia, contact an Alberta Agriculture district office for the video, "Stop sclerotinia," or the factsheet, "Sclerotinia stem rot of canola" (Agdex 149/632-5). The video is also available for loan through the central Film Library in Edmonton by writing 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. The factsheet is also available by writing the Publications Office at the same address.

Contact: *Rob Thirlwell* *Tom Schuler*
427-2127 *340-5325*

Farmer responsibilities highlighted in animal welfare video

Keys for good animal husbandry and care to protect farm animals and benefit the producer are highlighted in a new Alberta Agriculture video production.

"Farm animal welfare: the responsibility is yours" (VT 410-20-2) examines care standards in all stages of animals' lives and how livestock producers can fine tune their own operation. It's now available for loan at all Alberta Agriculture district video libraries.

"Farmers and ranchers, their associations, government as well as consumers share in this vital concern," says Ralph Shute, head of Alberta Agriculture's health management branch and one of the featured specialists in the 29 minute video. "While farmers are responsible for their animals, animal welfare doesn't stop at the farm gate. Transporters and processors are also involved," he adds.

Shute and colleague Ray Fenton, head of the department's livestock inspection section, discuss codes of practice that have been developed for a number of species. "The codes of practice provide comprehensive guidelines for handling livestock. As well, the provincial Animal Protection Act provides complete and effective legislation to resolve any problems," says Shute.

"The seven national codes outline minimum care standards," adds Fenton. The video discusses those standards that include adequate shelter, proper diet, available fresh water, freedom to move, company of other animals, proper flooring, health care, the opportunity to exercise, proper handling facilities, effective and appropriate reproductive management, and emergency procedures.

A number of producers add their expertise to the video by discussing the systems and procedures they use on their swine,

Contt'd on page 5

poultry and dairy farms, and cattle feedlot. One producer who contributed valuable advice was Bill Gonek of Morinville, honored by the SPCA as 1991 farmer of year.

Contact: *Dr. Ralph Shute* *Dr. Ray Fenton*
422-4844 *422-4844*

Add color to your summer with bedding plants

Adding color to your flower beds with annual flowers sounds easy, but that blooming color depends on some good gardening decisions says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Plant location affects what type of annuals you should buy. Where you put your plants and what kind of condition the soil is in also makes a difference to how colorful your summer will be," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton.

Before choosing bedding plants, consider where they will be transplanted. If the garden is in a shady area, choose suitable annuals such as begonias, impatiens and violas. Geraniums, marigolds, petunias, zinnias, snapdragons and portulaca thrive in bright sunny areas.

"Annuals have the added advantage of letting you try something different in your garden every year, so take a look around for new varieties," she suggests.

New varieties to look for include 'ideal violet' dianthus, 'peaches and cream' verbena and 'red plume' gaillardia. North adds wild flower seed mixes are also very popular.

When buying plants choose stocky, dark green vigorous plants with no yellow leaves. North also recommends buying compact plants, not spindly ones.

"The condition of the area you transplant into is also important," she adds. Organic matter should be added the soil at least every two years. An all purpose garden fertilizer such as 16-20-0 can be applied. Ideally, a soil test should also be taken.

When it comes time to transplant, evenings or cool days are the best times. "If you transplant when it's hot and sunny, you may cause the plants to suffer from transplant shock," says North.

North has several other transplanting tips. First, dig a hole large enough to accommodate the root system. If the plants aren't grown in cell packs, gently separate the plants keeping as much soil around the roots as possible. Leave a slight depression or well around the plant to hold water, and water the plant well. Bedding plants can be fertilized when they are transplanted. North suggests watering them with a high phosphorous fertilizer starter solution such as 10-52-10.

North also warns if there is a risk of frost to be prepared to cover plants to protect them. Tarps, burlap or old sheets over stakes can be used to shield plants from frost.

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422-1789

Agri-News briefs

Waste management field demonstration May 19

Alberta Agriculture's Farmers' Advocate and Olds College will hold a special liquid waste management field demonstration Tuesday, May 19 at 10 a.m. The demonstration will be at Olds College. Lam Bourne Enterprises Ltd. of Eckville will show the benefits of injecting liquid waste directly under the soil, rather than the usual injection or top dressing practices. Cliff Munroe, assistant to the Farmers' Advocate, and Russ Ayers-Berry, of Lam Bourne, will conduct the demonstration and be available for photos and interviews. For more information, contact Munroe at 427-2433 in Edmonton.

Southern Idaho ag tour planned for late July

The Alberta Agriculture Taber district office has organized a southern Idaho agriculture tour for July 26 through 30. "The aim of the tour is to allow southern Alberta producers to meet Idaho producers growing some of the same crops as we do, as well as operating much different operations than are found here," says Tilly Gamble, Taber district agriculturist. The guided motorcoach tour will include such areas of interest as: sugar beet and potato production; a Budweiser malt barley handling and malting facility; Kimberly research station including potato, dry bean and special crop production; dry bean, sweet corn, pea, dairy, forage and speciality crop seed producers; and, a large trout farming operation. Gamble adds efforts have been made to keep the tour affordable and comfortable. Cost is $280 for double occupancy and $370 for single (meals and entertainment aren't included). A $100 deposit is required by June 1. About half of the spots have already been booked. For more information, call Alberta Agriculture in Taber at 223-7907 or 223-7908.

Interprovincial grassland seminar and tour in Lloydminster

An interprovincial grassland seminar and tour will come to Lloydminster June 23 and 24. The two day event includes discussions of grazing issues in the United States; pasture and rangeland issues in Western Canada; government policies and the forage producer; trends in grassland research and development; forage marketing; beef market trends and custom grazing; new grass crops; and, water quality and nutrition. Tours on the evening of the first day and the morning of the second day will go on both sides of the Alberta and Saskatchewan border with stops at innovative producers, a Ducks Unlimited wildlife habitat development site, a Crown grazing lease with solar fencing and solar water pumping, and irrigated pasture and hay production. For more information, contact Harry Brook in Lloydminster at 871-6460.

Feedlot school June 4 & 5 in Vermilion

The Alberta Cattle Feeders Association (ACFA) is holding its annual feedlot school at Lakeland College in Vermilion June 4 through 5. The first day's program includes speakers on water management and run off; superior customer service suggestions for custom feedlots; evaluating the performance of 12 different breed bulls; care, maintenance and calibration of feedwagon and livestock scales; animal health; sorting cattle through the new beef grading system; and, forward contracting in 1992. Feedlot tours are featured during the second day. Anyone interested in the feedlot school can register by calling 1-800-363-8598. For more information, call the ACFA office in Calgary at 250-2509 or FAX 291-9841.

"Breeder's calculator" aids fertility evaluations

The Canadian Charolais Association (CCA) has recently developed a unique "breeder's calculator" for checking CCA minimum scrotal requirements in purebred bulls. The calculator or "scrotalator" allows producers to predict scrotum sizes on younger bulls. Neil Gillies, the association's genetic improvement manager, says the calculator can also be used for bulls of other breeds. The 3.5 inch by five inch calculator has three separate sliding insert cards for rating bulls at three different standards for 12, 13 and 14 months. It works is as follows. Current CCA guidelines require bulls to have a 32 cm minimum scrotal size at 14 months of age. A breeder can evaluate an 11-month old bull by using the calculator's sliding scale. The scale will tell the breeder the bull must have 29.5 cm testicles at 11 months in order to meet the CCA requirements. This type of adjusted scrotum sizing scale isn't new says Gillies, but it is the first pocket-sized handy one. He adds the calculator figures are based on averages and not absolutes. The "breeder's calculator" is available from the CCA for $6 (including GST, shipping and handling) at 2320 - 41st Ave. N.E., Calgary, Alberta, T2E 6W8. For more information, call 250-9242 or FAX 291-9324.

Ag ministers discuss transportation issues

The federal and provincial agriculture ministers concluded a recent meeting in Nisku, Alberta with a renewed commitment to resolve grain transportation issues that have dominated the policy agenda for over two decades. With the exception of Saskatchewan, the ministers reiterated the urgency of moving quickly, and agreed to narrow the number of options under consideration. The choice now appears to be between the status quo and a bond/annuity pay-out such as the "Freedom to choose" proposal put forward by Alberta. "Given the diversity of agriculture in this country, the ministers agreed to seriously examine the merits of offering individual provinces or individual farmers the freedom to choose their own solution," says Alberta's Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley. The ministers will resume their discussions at a July meeting in Halifax. For more information, contact: Brad Klak, the minister's executive assistant at 427-2137; Maureen Osadchuk, the associate minister's executive assistant at 422-9156; or, Ken Beswick, Alberta Agriculture planning secretariat, at 427-2417.

District video libraries well used

Rural Albertans are taking advantage of information available to them through video libraries at Alberta Agriculture district offices. Video loans for the 1991-92 fiscal year were up six per cent over the previous year. The over 5,660 loans was the highest total loan number since the library system was introduced in the late 1980s. Most loaned was, "The Lively Calf", a 1987 20-minute production on managing a cow herd before and during pregnancy to produce healthy calves. It was lent out a total of 222 times. For more information about the video library system, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

May 25, 1992

Wind protection major, but not only, shelterbelt benefit

Conservation minded landowners across Alberta are proving field shelterbelts are an important asset to their farming operation.

"Shelterbelts are a time proven means of conserving topsoil," says Rob Dunn, southern regional soil conservation co-ordinator.

When mature, a field shelterbelt offers a number of other conservation benefits adds John Timmermans, an Airdrie based soil conservation specialist who has studied and evaluated shelterbelt use. "Shelterbelts create an effective barrier slowing winds to help prevent wind erosion and wind damage to crops. This same effect can improve snow trap during the winter and shelter a crop from the drying effects of winds during the summer.

Brendan Casement, shelterbelt specialist with the department's Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre, agrees. "The primary effect of a windbreak is reduction in wind speed and the resulting changes are reflected in crop growth and development, and ultimately in yield." Crop yield responses are extremely variable, but yield increases have been reported in the five to 25 per cent range he adds.

An efficient shelterbelt planted at right angles to the prevailing wind direction reduces wind velocity for a distance of about twice the height of the shelterbelt on the windward side and 20 times its height on the leeward.

Timmermans was involved in a 1991 study of wind reduction by caragana field shelterbelts in south-central Alberta. "We found shelterbelts reduced winds perpendicular to the shelterbelt as far out in the field as 15 times the height of the shelterbelt," he says. He adds in-leaf caraganas were more effective than out-of-leaf in reducing wind velocity. Both, however, reduced wind velocity to about the same distance downwind.

Timmermans was also involved in a 1990 and 1991 study of field shelterbelt effects on soil moisture and crop yield. "There was Saskatchewan data that suggested field shelterbelts increased the yield of spring wheat by an average of five per cent. But we didn't have Alberta data on the economic returns for Alberta farmers."

A total of 14 field shelterbelts sites were used in the study. Its results indicate field shelterbelts increase the available moisture reserve and yield within its leeward zone.

Timmermans adds the loss of yield in the area from the shelterbelt to twice the shelterbelt's height (h) is more than compensated by the increase in the yield in the 2h to 20h area. "And the largest beneficial effects on yield were realized in a dry year when growing season precipitation was limited."

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A model shelterbelt occupies about three to five per cent of the field area. "Initially the shelterbelt will have a cost, and farmers probably won't see gains until year eight," says Casement. "But after that time, there can be up to 15 per cent increases of total crop yields and consequently profits for up to 50 years."

"Properly placed shelterbelts can have a positive effect on crop yields, more than compensating for lost acreage and any inconvenience in field operations," adds Dunn.

Casement says economic benefits of shelterbelts have been studied considerably in the last few years. Saskatchewan and U.S. researchers collaborated in 1991 to produce a computer program that estimates increased economic returns from shelterbelts. "Greater returns from shelterbelts are found in years of drought," he notes.

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For more information on field shelterbelts, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office or municipal agricultural fieldman.

Contact:	*Rob Dunn* *381-5126*	*John Timmermans* *948-8539*
	Brendan Casement *422-1789*	

Study examines shelterbelts and snowtrap

If conditions are favorable, a field shelterbelt can trap and retain a significant amount of snow over winter says an Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist.

"Field shelterbelts provide many advantages for improving the growing environment of crops. One of those advantages is trapping drifting snow," says John Timmermans. Trapped snow will increase spring soil moisture available to crops and contributes to crop yield, particularly when growing season precipitation is limited.

"The effectiveness of a shelterbelt trapping snow depends on a number of factors," says Timmermans. Those factors include the shelterbelt orientation, residue cover on the field, the porosity of the belt and the presence of other barriers windward of the shelterbelt. Timmermans examined those factors at three caragana shelterbelts in southern Alberta—at Crossfield, Acme and Vulcan—over the winter of 1990-91.

All the sites in the research project had mature single row caragana belts between four and five meters tall. Snow depth was measured downwind of the belts at one, two, three, five, 10, 15, 20 and 30 times the shelterbelt height (h). Soil moisture samples were taken in the fall and again in the spring.

The north-south belt in the project didn't show any appreciable snow trapping. The two east-west belts had significant snow trapping in the 1h to 7h zone. "These results weren't unexpected as most snow is accompanied by northerly winds that cause drifting on the south side of a barrier. Dense caragana belts tend to trap snow in large drifts near the belt where wind reduction is the greatest," Timmermans says.

Acme and Vulcan sites accumulated an average of three and five times respectively as much snow in the 1h to 7h zone as the open field. Timmermans notes the Acme site may not have been as effective because the field had partially covered residue rather than standing stubble and a field to its north had a system of shelterbelts that trapped a lot of drifting snow.

Brendan Casement, shelterbelt specialist with the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton, notes snow distribution is largely determined by the structure of the windbreak. "Dense, wide shelterbelts cause deep drifts to form within the shelterbelts and for a short distance outward from the shelterbelt.

"More porous, or open, shelterbelts scatter the snow in a thinner and much more uniform layer over a much greater distance on the leeward side," he says.

Besides influencing soil moisture, snow cover also provides some insulation he adds. "Three feet of snow from a shelterbelt limited freezing to four inches, while in an open field freezing penetrated to a depth of two feet in mid winter."

Casement also notes shelterbelts have been designed to trap snow to fill dugouts and farm reservoirs.

Timmermans also studied the effects of field shelterbelts on soil moisture and crop yield during 1990 and 1991. East-west belts were found to be more effective than north-south belts in increasing available moisture reserves and crop yields in south central Alberta.

North-south belts, on the other hand, provided more wind erosion protection to crops and soils, particularly in southern Alberta where the most erosive winds are from the west. For more information on the shelterbelt studies, contact Timmermans in Airdrie at 948-8539. For information on shelterbelts, contact the Alberta Agriculture district office nearest you.

Contact:	*John Timmermans* *948-8539*	*Brendan Casement* *422-1789*

Southern municipalities promote shelterbelts

Lack of time for proper shelterbelt planting and weed control was a big reason why farmers in the Municipal District of Cypress weren't interested in the time-proven remedy for conserving topsoil.

"Feedback from farmers convinced the municipality something needed to be done," says Rob Dunn, Lethbridge regional soil conservation co-ordinator. "Now Cypress provides a full service package that includes site preparation, planting and weed control for the first two years."

Doug Henderson, the area's agricultural fieldman, says over 13 miles of tree seedlings were planted in 1991. Similar numbers of trees will be planted in 1992.

Like the Municipal District of Cypress, several other southern Alberta agricultural service boards have also reacted to increased demand from landowners for shelterbelt programs, so have created specific programs with funding from the Canada-Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI).

The Taber Agriculture Service Board, for example, has been actively promoting field shelterbelts for irrigated cropland says Dunn. This spring trees will be planted in co-operation with several area irrigation farmers.

"Special consideration is being given so trees will provide the much needed shelter without restricting the irrigation system," he says.

Shelterbelt demonstrations across the region include testing

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different methods of weed control as well as different tree species. "One weed control method that proved effective last year was to lay down a polypropylene cloth mulch along the entire length of the shelterbelt," says Dunn. "This reduced moisture loss and helped prevent weed growth." Results are being monitored at six locations across southern Alberta this spring.

In species research, saskatoons have been planted in the Foremost area. Row planting is an attempt to provide wind protection and possible berry production.

Contact: Rob Dunn
381-5126

Livestock, wildlife also benefit from shelterbelts

Protection from the wind is perhaps the most important reason we plant trees and shrubs in windbreaks, but that's far from the only reason people have shelterbelts says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Those trees protect ourselves, our property, our livestock and the soil we cultivate for food," says Brendan Casement, shelterbelt specialist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

"Our conservation specialists tell farmers about the benefits field shelterbelts provide in terms of reducing wind erosion and improving soil moisture. But those aren't the only advantages of a shelterbelt," he adds.

Protecting crops from wind damage is another benefit of a shelterbelt. This includes traditional Alberta field crops. Shelterbelts protect sensitive crops, both in gardens and orchards in many countries he adds.

Windbreaks provide protection from severe weather throughout the year for both domestic animals and wildlife. "Precise values are difficult to determine, but there's general agreement livestock make greater gains, produce more milk, suffer smaller losses and make more efficient use of feed when protection is provided from high summer temperatures and winter winds," he says.

For example, ewes at the Bogoden Experimental Station of Astokhan in the former USSR produced 20 per cent more wool and dropped 30 per cent more lambs with a 30 per cent greater weight gain at four months when compared to ewes kept in the open. Poultry can also benefit with increased and prolonged egg production. Non-laying birds come into production sooner than birds in unprotected houses.

For wildlife, shelterbelts provide a source of food and habitat for a wide variety of game and non-game species. "Shelterbelts also have an effect on the number of breeding birds in adjacent fields, including species that don't use the windbreak itself," Casement says. "This may be due to the increased vegetation and population of flying insects on the leeward side."

Flying insects thrive in the improved microclimate around shelterbelts. Honey bees use shelterbelt areas for flyways. "Alfalfa, for example, depends on insects for pollination. Higher yields in sheltered fields may be due to the improved insect habitat, although destructive insects may also be harbored by the shelterbelt," he says.

Energy conservation is another benefit. Home heating costs can be reduced by as much as 30 per cent in the winter, and inside summer temperatures are lower. Windbreaks also help to reduce paint weathering and other maintenance expenses. Some are also planted to reduce noise.

A windbreak's value also includes the beautification of the area he adds. "A well designed windbreak can add diversity of color and texture in a landscape."

Roadside shelterbelts also benefit winter drivers. Placed at appropriate distances—at least twice the mature height of the shelterbelt—from the road, the shelterbelt can serve as an effective snow fence. It reduces snow drifting on roads and snow blowing across roads that limits visibility.

Starting on June 1, Alberta farmers can order shelterbelt trees for 1993 from their local Alberta Agriculture district office. For more information, call the nearest district office or municipal agricultural fieldman.

Contact: Brendan Casement John Timmermans
422-1789 948-8539

Watch for resistant horn flies

Insecticide resistant horn flies have appeared in southern cattle herds and an Alberta Agriculture livestock entomologist is advising producers to check their own herds.

"Producers who have used the same brand or same type of insecticide for the last eight to 10 years should be most concerned," says Ali Khan, of the beef cattle and sheep branch. Sub-lethal dosages and prolonged use of the same compound are two of the many factors responsible for insecticide resistance.

"Horn fly resistance isn't a new phenomenon," he adds. "In the 1960s, horn flies developed resistance to prolonged use of DDT and Methoxychlor."

Khan, who is monitoring fly resistance in the province, says resistant horn flies have been found for the last two years in southern areas of the Prairies. Last summer resistant horn flies were confirmed in isolated herds in the Provost-Czar area in eastern Alberta. "Most of the herds in that area with insecticide ear tags seemed to be okay," he notes. As well last year, producers in the Champion, Jenner, Mossleigh, Strathmore and Drumheller areas were compensated with replacement tags or refunds by one company.

Cattle should be checked for the presence of horn flies two to three weeks after application, he says, as tags are most effective in the first 60 days of application. Persistent horn flies in large numbers are an indication the flies are resistant to a particular ear tag.

Any incidents of horn fly resistance should be reported to the

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nearest Alberta Agriculture district office, municipal agricultural fieldman or directly to Khan in Edmonton at 427-5083 (toll-free through the nearest RITE operator).

Tags applied early, such as in April, won't be as effective in killing flies as those applied in June he notes. "Horn flies appear in most regions of central and northern Alberta in late May or June."

Contact: *Dr. Ali Khan*
427-5083

Report links livestock production and soil conservation

The role of livestock and forages in soil and water conservation is examined in a comprehensive report commissioned by Alberta Agriculture.

"Last fall the conservation and development branch and the beef cattle and sheep branch contracted a consulting company to do a thorough literature review of the links between livestock production and soil conservation," says Ross Gould, of the beef cattle and sheep branch.

The result is a 157 page literature review—in the form of a scientific monongraph—eleven pages of appendices, over 360 references and an over 350 word key word index. As well, a 35 page analysis overviews the review findings, recommending areas for further research and proposals for effective livestock-forage systems education and extension efforts.

Currently there is a very limited supply of the reports. Copies of any specific portion can be made he says. "We're in the process of planning distribution to our department's staff as well as members of public who may be interested."

Gould adds a full bibliography of all references found in the literature search is available, along with the full text of both reports on diskette. (The Word Perfect monograph file on diskette is over 600k. The analysis report and bibliography are considerable less because they don't include graphics.)

The report was prepared by Serecon Management Consulting of Edmonton.

For more information, contact Gould or Ron Weisenburger at 427-5083, or David Neilson at 422-4385.

Contact:	*Ross Gould* *427-5083* *David Neilson* *422-4385*	*Ron Weisenburger* *427-5083*

Stock dog demonstration comes to Calgary school

Sheep, ducks, and maybe even people, will be herded in a Calgary school yard by the mascot of Alberta's Agricultural Ambassador program.

Gus, a five-year old black and white border collie stock dog, will demonstrate his skills at the Colonel Sanders School in northwest Calgary on June 2. With help from trainer Murray Young, Gus will round up sheep in the school yard, then shoo ducks—and maybe some spectators—into the school hallways and gymnasium where displays and round table sessions will be held.

The stock dog demonstration, starting at 4 p.m., will be one feature of an orientation and resource review session for Calgary area agricultural ambassadors says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture's Agriculture in the Classroom program co-ordinator. The program runs from 4 p.m. through 7:30 p.m. Colonel Sanders School is located at 226 Northmount Drive N.W. in Calgary.

"While the session will provide an opportunity for ag ambassadors to network, the activities are also open to students, community members and teachers other than ag ambassadors," Gabert says. There is no admission charge to take part in the round table sessions or view the exhibits.

At least 15 different sectors in the agriculture industry will be providing displays for the event. Audio and visual resource material available for classrooms will be featured.

The round table sharing with teachers will include topics such as food safety, environmental resources, agricultural units for primary grades, the adopt-a-classroom program and education with puppets. "Most of the round tables will be hosted by teachers or resource people who have classroom ready resources," notes Gabert.

For more information, contact Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2402, or Anne Marshall, Colonel Sanders School co-ordinator, at 295-2290.

Contact:	*Betty Gabert* *427-2402*	*Ann Marshall* *295-2290*

Agri-News briefs

Shelter trees and watch them grow

Agriculture Canada is testing the effectiveness of new low-cost tree shelters. The shelters were recently introduced on the market by a Canadian company. Studies by the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) Shelterbelt Centre show the plastic tubes that surround newly-planted seedlings can triple the rate of tree growth. The new domestic version could be supplied at about half the price of imported tree shelters. For more information, contact John Sharpe at the PFRA Shelterbelt Centre at (306)695-2284.

Alberta 4-Her attends Atlantic vet seminar

An Alberta 4-H member learned more about the veterinary profession and had a taste of "Island" life during a week long stay in Prince Edward Island from May 14 through 21. Josie Kildaw, 17, of Lamont travelled to the 1992 Atlantic 4-H veterinary seminar in Charlottetown. Kildaw was the only Alberta participant at the seminar, a project of the Atlantic 4-H Committee and the Atlantic Veterinary College. Seminar sessions covered topics such as animal behavior and welfare, wildlife and ecology and a post-mortem demonstration. After the seminar, Kildaw spent four-days with a host family. Agriculture Canada sponsored Kildaw's trip to Prince Edward Island. A seven-year member of the Bruderheim Light Horse Club, Kildaw was chosen for the trip at the 1992 provincial 4-H selections program earlier this month. Trip awards are based on community and 4-H involvement as well as interpersonal skills. For more information contact Kildaw at 895-7625, or Marguerite Stark at 948-8510 in Airdrie.

Nominations open for 1992 Dairy Farm Beautification competition

The Alberta Dairy Association is now accepting nominations for the 1992 Dairy Farm Beautification Competition. Nominations must be received by the association's office by June 30. The competition encourages dairy producers to beautify their homesteads, demonstrate to the public dairy producers' pride in their work and professionalism, foster high quality dairy products through attractive and well maintained operations, and support the purity and wholesomeness of milk and milk products by demonstrating excellence on the dairy farm. Dairy farms may be nominated by the owners or anyone else (with owner consent). A minimum of three photos are required for the nomination. The Royal Bank will present each finalist farm with a plaque and the provincial winner will hold a trophy for one year. Each finalist farm will be given two complimentary tickets for an awards luncheon during the association's convention in Calgary February 1 through 3, 1993. The 1991 winner was George Beutler of Leduc. For more information, contact the Alberta Dairy Association in Edmonton at 455-5164.

Feedlot knowledge shared in Mexico

An Alberta Agriculture livestock specialist and Olds College's international education project manager were in Mexico recently to share their feedlot expertise. Don Milligan and Richmond Godfrey travelled to the University of Zacatacas to train 85 faculty members, veterinary students and livestock producers about the practice and importance of proper feedlot management. The Mexican feedlot industry is still in its infancy, notes the Airdrie based Milligan. "The oldest one we saw was four years old." For more information, contact Milligan in Airdrie at 948-8530, or Godfrey in Olds at 556-8368.

Lakeland College boar national winner

Lakeland College has received an award from the Canadian Duroc Swine Club for the highest indexing Duroc boar at a test station in Canada. The prize boar, Vermilion Power ATAT 418Z, attained an index of 203 on test at the Alberta Swine Breeders Association station in Leduc from January to December 1991. The boar reached a weight of 100 kg in 141 days with an average gain of 1.2 kg per day, a feed conversion rate of 2 kg of feed per 1 kg of gain and a backfat measurement of 10.3 mm. Matejka and Sons of Sylvan Lake purchased the boar. The award was presented recently in Quebec City at the national convention of the Canadian Purebred Swine Breeders Association. For more information, contact Cathy Gerry in Vermilion at 853-8597.

Oil recovery program celebrates first year

In its first year of operation, Oil Recovery Alberta collected just under one million litres of used oil as well as 138,000 (24,000 kg) plastic oil containers. The province wide program of the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) started in March 1991. All the used oil

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collected from 130 petroleum outlets went to Edmonton and Calgary companies for re-refining. For more information, contact Kelly Eaton with UFA in Calgary at 258-4518.

ASC recognizes rural safety essay winners

Grade five to eight students across Alberta wrote about driving rural safety home for the 1991 Alberta Safety Council's rural safety essay competition. Winning essays discussed safety issues from farm equipment to drinking and driving. Winners received their awards from Alberta's Lieutenant Governor Gordon Towers at a recent luncheon in Edmonton. The winners were: Andrea Noble, grade five, Barons School, County of Lethbridge; Craig Potter, grade six, Waverly School, County of Stettler; Shannon Stoby, grade seven, Savanna School, Spirit River School District; and, Amanda Powley, grade eight, A.L. Horton School, County of Minburn. The rural safety essay contest was established by the council 42 years ago. For more information, contact the Alberta Safety Council in Edmonton at 428-7555.

CORRECTION: Alberta Sunflower Seed Ltd. is located in **Bow Island** not Bow Valley as reported in the May 11, 1992 issue of Agri-News. The company recently presented a $5,000 cheque to the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks. Our apologies to Alberta Sunflower Seed—The Editor.

AL.1.611

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

June 1, 1992

Check cattle's summer water quality

While a dependable summer water supply is important for cattle producers, so should be the water quality says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Good quality water is important as it may be your next step in improving cattle production," says Bob Buchanan, regional engineering technologist in Barrhead.

Most cattle producers rely on surface water sources for their herd during the summer months.Dugouts, sloughs and creeks are common pasture water supplies. But, he says, producers should be aware surface water sources are especially susceptible to contamination from chemicals and some types of blue green algae that are toxic to cattle.

Agricultural, industrial and petroleum based chemicals can wash into water supplies during spring and summer runoff. Some are toxic and inhibit animal health, milk production, growth rates and reproduction. Natural and manufactured toxins can also cause subcelluar damage that leads to increased susceptibility to disease or parasites.

But potential toxins aren't the only thing that affects water quality. Some physical, chemical and bacteriological properties of water can also affect its taste and suitability for cattle.

Excessive levels of salinity, hardness, color, turbidity, bad taste, odor and bacterial contamination can all deteriorate water quality he says. "In some cases animal health is affected, and in others, poor tasting water can cause cattle to drink less and reduce feed intake that in turn reduces production."

Buchanan recommends watching cattle and their water source regularly through the summer. "If there are signs of contamination, then test your water immediately, and if possible move the cattle to another water source."

He also suggests pumping water to cattle wherever possible to protect the water source and improve water quality. "It's no surprise that cattle actually prefer drinking from a stock tank rather than wading to their bellies in mud for a drink." Poor access can also reduce water intake and affect production.

If blue green algae appears, it can be controlled with copper sulphate (blue stone) or hydrated lime. Hydrated lime is preferred as it brings a greater overall improvement in water quality. Both controls, however, require precautionary measures by the producer.

Hydrated lime is a corrosive chemical and producers must wear safety equipment when handling it to protect their skin and eyes from chemical burns. Caution is also necessary when using copper sulphate on heavy growths of blue green algae because of sudden release of algae toxins.

"Recent research has shown that cattle should be removed from the water for a period of two weeks after copper sulphate treatment," he adds.

Water quality issues are one of the main focuses of the Prairie Water News, a semi-annual publication dedicated to protecting and improving rural water supplies. Alberta

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

producers can pick up the newsletter from Alberta Agriculture regional and district offices, or from district Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PRFA) offices.

Contact: *Bob Buchanan*
674-8252

Think about next winter's snowtrap now

Not even skiers usually think about snow in early June, but farmers in dry areas should be thinking about the white stuff says an Alberta soil conservation specialist.

"More specifically, farmers should be thinking about what they can do now to trap snow next winter to increase soil moisture and provide winter kill protection for winter annuals and forage crops," says Ben Froebel, regional soil conservation co-ordinator in Red Deer.

Froebel says there are a number of simple, low cost and effective ways to trap snow that can be done in the spring and summer. Planting perennial grass, such as tall wheatgrass, in barrier strips on summerfallow is one method.

Perennial grasses have the advantage of being easy to maintain, non-competitive with adjacent crops and have tall growth. The strip can be either a single or double row. "While double rows take up more of the field, they do appear to be effective," he says. In dry years yields will be significantly better, he adds, while in wet years, yields will be similar or slightly lower than crops in open fields. Strip barriers have the added advantage of reducing wind erosion.

Leaving narrow uncut strips of forage every 15 metres will be especially beneficial in dry years. "Additional yield from the trapped snow's extra moisture will compensate for the forage lost in the unharvested strips. And, by protecting against winterkill, you also have the option of using higher yielding varieties," Froebel says.

Trapping snow, as much as getting the crop off before snow comes, should be a concern at harvest he adds. "Tall stubble catches snow. The entire field can be swathed or direct combined at a high uniform height or narrow strips of high stubble can be left as windbreaks."

He also notes trapping at least 10 cm of snow will increase the chance winter annuals have of survival.

Contact: *Ben Froebel*
340-5329

Spruce pests may be around early

An early spring may have brought out spruce and other evergreen pests before they usually appear.

"Spider mites normally hatch in late May or early June. This season seems to be about two weeks earlier than other years, so pests may be out earlier," says Pam North, horticulturist with Alberta Agriculture's Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

Spider mites are one of three common pests that attack spruce trees she notes. The other two are cooley gall aphids and yellow-headed spruce sawflies.

Damage from spider mites can first be seen in the centre of the tree, generally at its base, and then works upwards and outwards. Needles begin to lose their color, turn yellowish-brown, then brown and finally dry up. A very fine webbing between the needles and dusty looking needles also indicate that spider mites are present.

Mites are reddish brown or yellowish brown with two dark spots on their backs. They are difficult to see with the naked eye. One way to see if they've infested a tree is to hold a piece of white paper under a branch and shake it. "If there are mites, they will fall on the paper and can be seen moving around," says North.

Washing trees off with a strong jet of water from a hose will break up webs and wash mites off. The jet should have good pressure and the water should be worked towards the centre of the tree and on the undersides of the branches.

A number of registered insecticides can also be used to combat spider mites. These include dicofol (kelthane), diazinon and malathion. Use two to three applications applied once every seven to 10 days.

Cooley gall aphids can be first observed as new growth develops into cone shaped galls resembling a pineapple. Green originally, galls later turn reddish purple, then brown as they dry out. They vary in size but are usually about five cm (two inches) long. Another indication of these aphids is white cottony specks appearing on trees in the spring and through the summer.

Aphids feed inside the galls leaving them in midsummer. As they begin feeding on the needles, white cottony specks appear on the trees. "Unfortunately, once you see the gall, it's really too late to control them because the aphids are feeding inside.

"If there are only a few galls, hand pick them from the tree. When you see the white specks, you can spray with carbaryl or malathion. Repeat the application once or twice at seven to 10 day intervals," she advises.

In mid-June yellow-headed spruce sawflies make their appearance. This insect does its damage while still in the larval, or caterpillar, stage. When young, they have a

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yellowish green body and an orange-yellow head. As they mature, they become dark green with a grey-green stripe down each side of their body. They reach about 2.5 cm (one inch) in length.

"Because of their color, they blend in with the needles and are difficult to see unless looked for very closely," she says.

Sawflies damage spruce by eating needles and can leave trees looking ragged and brown. North says two to three years of moderate defoliation are enough to kill a tree, so immediate control is necessary.

"Again, if only a few of the larvae are present, hand pick them off the tree. If there are too many for hand picking, apply malathion, diazinon or carbaryl when you first spot the insects," she says. Reapply if more insects are seen. For malathion to be most effective, temperatures should be above 20oC.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

New farm machinery costs guide released

Interest rates are one of the factors examined in the latest edition of Alberta Agriculture's "Farm machinery costs as a guide to custom rates" (Agdex 825-4).

A reduction in interest rates is a major difference in the costs related to new farm machinery in 1991 and 1992 says an Alberta Agriculture farm management economist. "The interest rate reduction lowers the fixed cost of big ticket items such as tractors and combines," says David Thacker, of the farm business management branch in Olds.

"For this year's calculations, the Bank of Canada prime rate is assumed to be seven per cent, which is three per cent lower than last year," he adds.

The guide, organized by fixed and variable costs, provides information on current machinery prices, repair rates, performance, capacity and fuel consumption. Tractors, combines, farm trucks, and tillage, seeding, spraying, baling and forage equipment are included, as are smaller machinery such as grinders, mixers, dryers and rock pickers. A worksheet for producers to calculate their machinery costs is also part of the guide.

"This information is helpful as a basis for budgeting, and for determining what to charge for custom work," says Thacker. The 1991 custom rates summaries are also included for comparison purposes.

Alberta Agriculture has published information annually since 1975 about the costs of owning and operating farm machinery. The guide is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: David Thacker
556-4247

Summer camp fun and learning

Five days of a unique camping experience are offered to Alberta junior 4-H members through the summer camping program.

"The Monday through Friday camps throughout all the regions will have days packed with challenging, exciting and different events, but the length of the camps is the only similarity between the 1992 camps and past camps," says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist.

New and completely different programs have been developed for the various camping age groups ranging from age 10 through 14. The themes for the 1992 camps are "under the sea" and "the magical mystery tour". "They promise some highly original experiences for the campers," adds Stark.

Stark notes the goal of the 1992 summer camp planning team is to develop, implement and evaluate an original camping program that not only challenges the campers, but also provides enjoyment and the opportunity for increased personal and interpersonal awareness and development.

"This year's program is also highly geared to an agricultural focus, and will continue to place emphasis on learning about the environment, conservation, patriotism and 4-H from educational and recreational points of view," she says.

While the deadline for summer camp applications has passed, there are still some spaces available in the camps. Interested 4-H members can contact Stark in Airdrie at 948-8510, or the camp staff team at 948-8572.

Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8510

Alberta Agriculture appointments

District home economists move south

Three Alberta home economists have transferred to positions in southern Alberta. Lynne Nieman is returning to southern Alberta with a new posting in Claresholm after spending just over a year at the Fort Saskatchewan district office. "I'm returning to the comfort of something familiar," she says. Previously, Nieman spent five years in Oyen. She started with the department in Valleyview in 1982. She also has experience as the provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist. Nieman is currently a MSc candidate in rural extension studies at the University of Guelph. She holds a BSc in home economics from the University of Saskatchewan. She was raised on her family's grain farm at Englefeld, Saskatchewan, about 140 km east of Saskatoon. Nieman can be reached in Claresholm at 625-3301.

Jacqueline Popko is moving from Alberta's pumpkin capital of Smoky Lake to the bean capital of Bow Island and duties as district home economist in Bow Island-Foremost. She says she's looking forward to the farming differences, including many special crops and irrigation in her new territory. Popko joined Alberta Agriculture last year after graduating from the University of Alberta with a BSc in home economics. Popko is originally from Westlock. She can be reached in Bow Island at 545-2233.

Sharon Stollery joined Alberta Agriculture at the Fort Vermilion district office last fall and will move south and east to duties in St. Paul. A 1991 graduate of the University of Alberta with a BSc in home economics, Stollery says she is looking forward to new experiences in the St. Paul area. Stollery is originally from the Camrose area and was raised on a mixed grain and beef farm. She can be reached in St. Paul at 645-6301.

Alberta Agriculture district home economists provide information to farm families and organize courses and activities in a variety of subject areas ranging from farm management to protective clothing. They also promote Alberta Made food products and work closely with rural organizations, in particular 4-H clubs.

Agri-News briefs

Farm enterprise manual available

A reference manual with management information on eight Alberta farm enterprises in now available. Compiled by the farm business management branch and printed by Olds College, the manual is designed as a quick awareness reference with contacts for specific expertise. Formerly titled the "Agricultural Lenders Manual", the reference guide is reprinted annually as a reference for a five day farm lenders course. Factors affecting the profitability of beef, cow/calf, crop, dairy, swine, sheep, horse, beekeeping and poultry operations are outlined in the manual. The manual also has sections on irrigation, machinery and agricultural resources. Anyone interested in the 1992 manual should send a $35 cheque (payable to Olds College) to Cindy Turner, Extension Services, Olds College, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0, or call her for more information at 556-8344. Further information is also available from Craig Edwards or David Thacker at the farm business management branch at 556-4240.

Saskatoon symposium looks at future food animal production

The Western College of Veterinary Medicine will present a special symposium on the future of the prairie livestock industry June 15 and 16 in Saskatoon. Titled, "Assessing the future of food animal production in Western Canada", the mini-conference will interest anyone with a stake in the food sector. The program features notable experts from industry, government and the research community. Some of the topics include: vertical integration; politics and the food industry; trends in consumer preference; and, the impact of the animal welfare movement. For more information, contact the college's continuing veterinary education section at (306)966-7267.

Fletcher's shares going to pork producers

Ownership and control of Fletcher's Fine Foods will pass from the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation to individual pork producers in 1993.

Approximately 1,500 producers, one third of all active producers, voted almost two to one for a share distribution method that will see two categories of producers eligible to receive common shares. The first group will be currently registered producers active from January 1981 to November 25, 1985, a period of extra levies, when Fletcher's was purchased. Following this initial distribution, a second group of producers will receive rights to purchase common shares. The producer vote rejected a share distribution method which would have seen only currently registered extra levy producers receive shares. This latest ballot was in response to a 1991 producer opinion poll calling for both ownership and control of Fletcher's to be transferred to producers by the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation. For more information, contact Jurgen Preugschas, chairman of the ownership review committee, in Mayerthorpe at 786-2187, or Ed Schultz at 474-8288.

Olds College signs exchange agreement with Costa Rica

Alberta's Olds College and the Costa Rican Technological Institute (ITCR) have signed a five year co-operative education agreement. The agreement will promote development and on-going training of horticulture and agriculture specialists in Costa Rica. Some of the potential activities coming out of the agreement include an ITCR faculty upgrading program at Olds College; technology transfer programs, consulting and technological assistance; faculty and student exchanges; continuing education activities; exchange of academic and technical materials; and, library development. For more information, contact Reg Radke, manager of international education, at 556-8394 in Olds.

ACC launches environment week initiatives

The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) will celebrate environment week (May 31 to June 6) by launching two initiatives. Its "Just Facts" media kit has been updated and will be redistributed. The ACC also commissioned an environmental risk assessment. "In general terms the assessment indicates that beef cattle production is compatiable with the environmentally sound, sustained use of land, water and air resources on which we rely," say Gary Sargent, the ACC general manager. For more information, contact Sargent or JoAnne Lemke in Calgary at 275-4400, or Tony Nichols in Castor at 882-2343.

Coming agricultural events

Canadian Water Resources Association 45th annual conference: Resolving conflicts and uncertainty in water management
Kingston, Ontario . . . . June 3-5
CWRA - (613)546-4228 - Glenburnie, Ontario

Pesticide $en$e field day
Lakeland College
Vermilion . . . . June 4
Christina Arvidsson - 853-8623 - Vermilion

Alberta Dairy Congress (6th annual)
Blackgold Centre
Leduc . . . . June 4-6
Iris Yanish - 986-8108 - Leduc

Alberta Cattle Feeders Association Feedlot School
Lakeland College
Vermilion Campus . . . . .June 4 - 5
Barb Dixon - 853-8607 - Vermilion

4-H on Parade
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . June 5-7
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

World Pork Expo
Des Moines, Iowa . . . . June 5-7
National Pork Producers Council - (515)223-2600 - Des Moines, Iowa

Symposium on grain storage
Delta Hotel
Winnipeg, Manitoba . . . . .June 7-10
D. Jayas - (204)474-6292 - Winnipeg, Manitoba

Advanced Beef Cattle Judging Seminar
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . .June 8-10
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Women of Unifarm annual convention
Olds College
Olds . . . . .June 9-11
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Alberta Pork Congress
Westerner Exposition
Red Deer . . . . .June 9-11
Pat Kennedy - 340-5307 - Red Deer

Beef Congress
Westerner Exposition
Red Deer . . . . June 16-18
Pat Kennedy - 347-4491 - Red Deer

Western Canadian Farm Progress Show
Exhibition Park
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . .June 17-19
Regina Exhibition Association - (306)781-9200 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Appli-Tech'92: Agricultural chemical application technology for the '90s
Western Canada Farm Progress Show
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . .June 17-19
Bruce Hobin - (306)-966-5551 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Alberta Cowboy Poetry Association '92 Gathering
Pincher Creek Community Hall
Pincher Creek .June 19-21
Anne Stevick - 627-4733 - Pincher Creek; Bev Barr - 628-2115 - Pincher Creek

Canadian Agricultural Extension Council annual meeting
Fredericton, New Brunswick . . . . .June 21-23
John Tackaberry - 427-2409 - Edmonton

20th Triennial Conference the Associated Country Women of the World
The Hague, Netherlands . . . . .June 22-29
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912 - Edmonton

22nd annual Alberta and 38th annual Canadian Plowing Championships
Wanham, Alberta . . . . .June 25-28
Brenda Pelletier - 359-3828 - Eaglesham

Breton Plots field day
Breton plots
Breton . . . . .July 3
J. Robertson - 492-0191 - Edmonton; Cesar Izaurralde - 492-5104; Tom Goddard - 422-4385 - Edmonton

Calgary Stampede
Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Park
Calgary . . . . .July 3-12
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

18th annual Alberta Ram Test Station Sale
Olds . . . . .July 4
Kim Stanford - 948-8517 - Airdrie

Agricultural Institute of Canada annual conference: The family farm in the 21st century
University of Brandon
Brandon, Manitoba . . . . .July 5-9
Red Forbes - (204)727-9702 - Brandon, Manitoba

Canadian Pest Management Society annual meeting
Brandon University
Brandon, Manitoba . . . . July 6-8
Biology department - (204)727-9623 - Brandon, Manitoba

Canadian Seed Trade Association annual convention
Sheraton Hotel
Halifax, Nova Scotia . . . . July 7-10
CSTA - (613)829-9527 - Neapean, Ontario

Roots of Plant Nutrition conference
Chancellor Hotel and Convention Centre
Champaign, Illinois . . . . July 8-10
Dr. Terry Roberts - 345-4460 - Coaldale

Canadian Seed Growers Association 88th annual meeting
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario . . . . July 8-10
Doug McLaren - (519)767-3178 - Guelph, Ontario

Western Riding School (CEF Rider level I-II)
Lakeland College
Vermilion Campus . . . . July 13-17
Barb Dixon - 853-8607 - Vermilion

Farm Camp (ages 10-13)
Lakeland College
Vermilion Campus . . . . July 13-17
Christina Arvidsson - 853-8623 - Vermilion

Klondike Days
Edmonton Northlands
Edmonton . . . . July 16-25
Leroy Emerson - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Unifarm summer provincial council meeting
Grande Prairie . . . . July 20-21
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) Agricultural Service Board summer tour
Oyen area . . . . July 22
Dianne Westerlund - 664-3777 - Oyen

Agriculture Field Day
Experimental Farm
Fort Vermilion . . . . July 22
Dr. George Clayton - 927-3253 - Fort Vermilion

Prairie-Parkland Chapter, Society for Range Management annual meeting
Board room, Alsask Retirement Villa
Alsask, Saskatchewan . . . . July 23
Daryl Tumbach - (306)662-2464 - Maple Creek, Saskatchewan

First Canadian Master Gardeners conference
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan . . . . July 26-29
Bruce Hobin - (306)966-5551 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Canadian Federation of Agriculture semi-annual council meeting
Halifax, Nova Scotia . . . . July 27-30
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) research farm day
LARA research farm (six miles east of Bonnyville) . . . . July 30
Dave Burdek - 623-5213 - Lac La Biche; Guy Bonneau - 826-7260 - Bonnyville; Jay Byer - 826-3388 - Bonnyville

Alberta 4-H 75th anniversary Showcase'92
Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Park
Calgary . . . . July 30 - August 2
Mahlon Weir - 427-2541 - Edmonton; Gail Companion - 652-4023 - High River

89th American Society for Horticultural Science annual meeting
Sheraton Waikiki and Sheraton Princess Kaiulani
Honolulu, Hawaii . . . . July 31 - August 8
D. Cavaletto - (808)956-8351 - Honolulu, Hawaii

International Symposium on Agricultural Techniques in Cold Regions II (ISAAC II)
University of Alberta
Edmonton . . . . August 4-7
David Chanasyk - 492-3242 - Edmonton

Crops Field Day & Tour
Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center
Brooks . . . . August 7
Gordon Frank - 362-1212 - Brooks

Alberta Red Poll Club field day
Merv and Lorraine McRorie farm
Jarvie . . . . August 8
Lorraine McRorie - 954-3943; Jackie Fleming - 349-3048 - Ponoka

Environmental Soil Science conference
Edmonton . . . . August 8-15
Yash Kalra - 435-7210 - Edmonton; Bill McGill - 492-5397 - Edmonton

American Phytopathological Society meeting
Portland, Oregon . . . . August 8-12
Corie Dacus - (612)454-7250 - St. Paul, Minnesota

Jackpot Mark of Excellence Hereford Show
Millet . . . . August 9
Tom Jacobsen - 387-4735 - Millet; Clarence Potter - 967-2138 - Onoway

3rd World Sheep and Wool Congress
Plaza Hotel
Buenos Aires, Argentina . . . . August 9-16
Norma Dunn - 289-7337 - Calgary; Peggy Newman - 652-7563 - Blackie

Summer Agricultural Education Institute
Lakeland College
Vermilion Campus . . . . August 10-21
Robert Brad - 853-8438 - Vermilion; Betty Gabert - 427-2403 - Edmonton

Alberta Standardbred Horse Sale
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . August 29-30
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Equifar and Alberta Breeds for the World
Spruce Meadows
Calgary . . . . September 8-13
Randy Fedorak - 254-3200 - Calgary

Canadian Team Cattle Penning Finals
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . September 12-13
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Alberta Horse Improvement Program
Westerner
Red Deer . . . . September 19-20
. . . . September 26-27
Les Burwash - 297-6650 - Calgary

Animal Welfare, Animal Rights and Agriculture conference
Lethbridge Lodge
Lethbridge . . . . September 23-24
Wayne Anderson - 459-3981 - St. Albert

National Quarter Horse Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . September 23-27
Barb McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Annual meeting of the Canadian Entomological Society and Saskatchewan Entomological Society
Delta Bessborough
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan . . . . September 27-30
P.G. Mason - (306)975-7014 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

1st Circumpolar Agricultural Conference: Sustainable Agriculture in a circumpolar environment
Whitehorse, Yukon . . . . September 28 - October 2
Rachael Lewis - (403)668-7663 - Whitehorse, Yukon

Smoky Lake World Pumpkin Federation Weighoff
Smoky Lake . . . . October 2-3
Town office - 656-3674 - Smoky Lake; (evenings)Larry Lafleur - 656-3539 - Smoky Lake; (evenings) Barry Court - 656-3508 - Smoky Lake

Cutting Horse Futurity
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . October 15-17
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Sale
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . October 24
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

4th National Ag in the Classroom conference
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton . . . . October 24-27
REDA office - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Annual meeting of the American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America and the Soil Society of America
Minneapolis, Minnesota . . . . November 1-6
ASA/CSSA/SSSA - (608)273-8080 - Madison, Wisconsin

Erosion: causes to cures short course and conference
Ramada Renaissance
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . November 2-4
Ray Pentland - (306)949-8288 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Alberta Horticultural Congress and trade show
Coast Terrace Inn/Convention Inn South
Edmonton . . . . November 5-7
Simone Demers Collins - 427-7366 - Edmonton

Alberta Market Gardners Association annual meeting
Edmonton . . . . November 6
Tam Volk - 921-2272 - Bon Accord

Farmfair'92
Edmonton Northlands Agricom
Edmonton . . . . November 6-14
Leroy Emerson - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Alberta Beekeepers Association annual general meeting and convention
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton . . . . November 25-26
Gertie Adair - 489-6949 - Edmonton

Poultry and Rabbit Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . November 27-19
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Canadian Western Agribition
Exhibition Park
Regina, Sasakatchewan . . . . November 28 - December 4
Canadian Western Exhibition Association - (306)565-0565 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association annual meeting and trade show
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff . . . . December 2-5
Nigel Bowles - 489-1991 - Edmonton

Note: Local fairs are not listed in the Coming Agricultural Events list. A list is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Coming agricultural events

- Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in September through December in 1992, or in 1993? Are there any events omitted in the attached list?

- Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name**, **city** or **town**, and **phone number** of a contact person for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by August 21, 1992 to:
Agri-News Editor
Print Media Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed September 7, 1992)

Phone (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

June 8, 1992

UFA renews support to Summer Ag Institute

The Summer Agricultural Institute has received another boost from one of its major sponsors.

The United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) has renewed its commitment to the agricultural awareness program for Alberta teachers by pledging another two years in scholarship funding for the full-credit, fourth year university level course.

"UFA's continued support of the Summer Agricultural Institute demonstrates interest and advocacy in agricultural awareness. This leadership role has been a major contributor to the success of the institute and promoting the entire agriculture industry," says Shirley McClellan, Alberta's associate agriculture minister and minister reponsible for rural development.

"Our membership and delegates see the need for more agricultural education and supporting those efforts any way we can," says Orval Sorken, UFA president.

The Summer Agricultural Institute was launched in 1990 in Lethbridge, moving to Olds College in 1991 and will run at Lakeland College in Vermilion August 10 through 21 this year. During the 11-day program, teachers explore the diversity of Alberta's agriculture industry through an active learning environment with expert guest speakers, agricultural tours and a stay with a farm family. Production, processing, marketing, and research and development are highlighted.

Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture's Agriculture in the Classroom program says institute graduates have become part of a growing network of agricultural ambassadors in Alberta schools, linking educators and the agriculture industry.

Brochures with application forms and further information are available by calling the Agriculture in the Classroom program in Edmonton at 427-2402.

Contact: *Maureen Osadchuk* *Leigh Olmstead*
422-9156 *258-4500*
Betty Gabert
427-2402

Dugout water should be disinfected before drinking

An Alberta Agriculture specialist is surprised by the number of people who use and drink water from dugouts without treating it.

Ken Williamson, regional engineering technologist in Red Deer, says two surveys—one in Alberta and one in Saskatchewan—suggest at least two thirds of the people using dugout water in their homes don't disinfect that water before they use it.

"When you consider that a sample of surface water will often have a bacteria plate count of several thousand per millilitre, it's amazing more people don't get sick," Williamson says.

At the very least, he says, water should be disinfected and filtered. "A properly installed disinfection system will provide a fair degree of protection from water borne disease and will make aesthetic improvements to the water."

Simple chlorination and filtration systems have been in use for many years. Basic systems include: a small chemical feed pump

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

that injects chlorine bleach into the waterline; a retention coil or tank allowing a minimum contact time for the chlorine to act; and, a filter to remove anything that can be strained out of the water (including excess chlorine).

"This basic system can be modified to suit a variety of situations," notes Williamson. Pellet chlorinators can be used to dispense the chlorine. Additional chemical feed pumps can be used to add settling agents such as alum to remove suspended sediment and color. Extra equipment, such as water softeners, can also be added if required.

Chlorination systems do have some disadvantages he adds. They are costly and do require maintenance. The minimum cost of a simple system is about $2,500 and more deluxe systems can range to $6,000. Maintenance is a chronic problem as chemical feed mixtures must be checked and adjusted, pumps need regular servicing, retention tanks must be flushed and filters backwashed. Activated carbon filters have a limited life span, and granular activated carbon must be changed annually.

"Even with a strong chlorine solution going into the filter, it does become populated with bacteria," he says. "Activated carbon has the ability to remove some potentially hazardous substances including naturally produced algae toxins and by-products of chlorination. The older the carbon gets, the less likely it will remove these hazards."

Williamson recommends that any dugout water used for drinking should be distilled, even if it has been run through the best filtration system.

Water quality issues are one of the main focuses of the **Prairie Water News**, a semi-annual publication dedicated to protecting and improving rural water supplies. Alberta producers can pick up the publication from Alberta Agriculture regional or district offices, or from district Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) offices.

Contact: Ken Williamson
340-5324

Take safety precautions when using pesticides

Taking appropriate safety precautions when handling pesticides starts with reading the product's label and moves through to hanging protective clothing to line-dry says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"All of your safety measures start with the pesticide's label. The label is a tool that must be used," says Bertha Eggertson, provincial clothing and textiles specialist.

Label instructions detail how much pesticide to mix, how to apply it, where to apply it and precautions such as necessary additional safety equipment. The label also notes the toxicity from low through high.

Protective clothing is the next link in the safety chain. Protective clothing acts as a barrier to skin absorption of pesticides. Basic protection includes a long sleeve shirt, full-length trousers, coveralls, unlined nitrile gloves, neoprene overboots or long rubber boots and a wide brimmed hard hat. "Use clothing worn for handling pesticides for that purpose only," she adds.

Extra layers of protection, such as disposable coveralls and a waterproof apron, provide added protection when using concentrated pesticides. Safety equipment may also be necessary for extra protection. This includes goggles or face shield, ear plugs and respirator.

"Just as there are some things you must definitely wear, there are some definite wrong things to wear," she says. This includes fabric hats, fabric or leather shoes and belts, and contact lenses. "All of these articles can be a continuous source of contamination because they can't be cleaned adequately."

Personal hygiene is also part of the safety equation. Farmers shouldn't eat, smoke, drink, go to the bathroom without first washing their hands or carry gum and candy in their pockets while applying pesticides. After removing protective clothing, immediately take a shower she advises. "If you don't shower and shampoo your hair after using pesticides, you increase your chance of absorption."

The final safety link is proper laundry practices. "Wash your protective clothing and equipment daily," she says. Gloves should be washed inside and outside daily and checked for holes and other signs of deterioration. Replace gloves immediately if there is any sign of deterioration.

Whoever handles pesticide soiled clothing should use unlined nitrile gloves. Any saturated garment should be discarded. Protective clothing should be washed separately from regular laundry. Pretreat with a stain remover or use a prerinse/soak cycle on the machine. Use the hot water setting, full water level, normal cycle and extra heavy duty detergent. Repeat the wash. When finished, run the empty washer through a full cycle with hot water and detergent.

Line drying the clothing is also recommended. "This prevents contaminating the dryer and also increases chemical breakdown of any residue," she says.

Farm families should contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office for further information. Brochures and videos are available.

Contact: Bertha Eggertson
427-2412

Modest fall slaughter cattle rally possible

A modest fall rally may be possible in slaughter cattle markets says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Any rally will depend on the rate of cattle marketing and placements in the U.S. this summer," says Ron Gietz.

Gietz says improved beef demand from a stronger economy still hasn't materialized. "Considering the still large supplies of competing meats, cattle prices aren't likely to get much support

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from the demand side."

Alberta fed cattle prices were higher than expected in May, coming under pressure only after the holiday weekend. "The week ending May 15 saw the highest average steer prices of 1992, and heifer prices comparable to prices during March and April," he says.

Further weakness in the Canadian dollar and tight supplies of fed cattle in the U.S. contributed to the firm Alberta market in the first half of May. But, prices did slide dramatically from May 15 as the U.S. market underwent a major adjustment. "The swift one week decline was prompted by slightly higher kill volumes, which indicate the sensitivity of the current market to even minor supply increases," Gietz says.

The price move, as is often the case, occurred around a three day weekend in the U.S. With poor packer margins and large supplies of competing meat, there appears to be very little demand resilience for beef in the American market he adds.

The least active of the Alberta livestock markets remains the feeder cattle market. Gietz expects steady prices to continue and notes, "the highs in the fed cattle market are over for 1992. If a significant price shift occurs in the feeder market, it's more likely to be down than up".

Early marketings of yearlings and cull cows are possible if there's widespread dry weather he adds.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Bullish tone in oilseed market

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) report on 1992 soybean production put a bullish overtone in the oilseed market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The USDA expects stocks to tighten," says Jo Ann Sandhu. "However, price gains due to tightening oilseed stocks were undermined late in May by forecasts of rain in the U.S. midwest, rain that would alleviate current dry conditions."

While the USDA report set up much of the fundamental supply/demand picture for oilseeds in the coming crop year, weather will continue to be the dominant factor in oilseed markets over the next months she adds.

"The downside of the oilseed market will come from above average rainfalls in the U.S. midwest which could increase soybean production. But, the increase probably wouldn't be enough to increase carry over stock levels," Sandhu says. Much of the expected rainfall has already been factored in the market and further large price declines appear to be unlikely.

The upside of the oilseed market is current dry conditions. "If forecast rain doesn't materialize in a significant way, then futures are likely to rally," she says. As the crop year progresses through critical growth stages, high temperatures—especially in tandem with dry weather—will also become an important stimulus to market rallies.

Sandhu notes the domestic canola crushing industry in Canada appears to have become healthier. "At times they are offering more competitive basis levels than many elevators. Producers who haven't been dealing with local crushers should give consideration to this market in the coming crop year.

"With an improved potential for increased canola oil sales into the U.S., domestic crushers may become even more aggressive in securing their supplies of seed," she adds.

Contact: Jo Ann Sandhu
427-5387

Manure injection system offers benefits

Some call it the smell of money, but others aren't so thrilled when manure odor wafts through their neighborhood.

As the province's producers get more rural neighbors, Alberta Agriculture's Farmers' Advocate Office has dealt with more concerns about odors related to farm operations. "Our office and department specialists have been researching and examining ways to curb problems associated with manure disposal," says Cliff Munroe, assistant farmers' advocate.

Most recently the Farmers' Advocate Office, in conjunction with Olds College, held a special field demonstration of a system that injects liquid hog manure directly into the ground.

"The system offers a number of advantages compared to the usual practice of surface spreading. We see it as both a good farming practice as well as something beneficial to the community," says Munroe. The manure retains its nutrient value when it's injected into the ground and isn't exposed to the air. These benefits are important to the farmer, but the one most people are interested in is that there is virtually no odor during and after application. "Certainly this system won't be for everyone, but in densely populated rural areas it can be a win-win situation for the farmer and the community; better use of available manure nutrients and better neighbour relations," he says.

In this particular injection system, liquid manure is moved from a holding tank through a system of steel pipes to a flex hose. The hose is directly attached to an adapted deep tillage cultivator. The injection system distributes manure through flex coils attached to seven shanks and shovels. Manure is injected to a depth of four to six inches. In the Olds demonstration the field received 8,000 gallons of manure per acre.

Lam Bourne Enterprises Ltd. of Eckville conducted the demonstration. A company official says demand for the equipment has already been great, even though the equipment is new and not much advertising has been done.

Contact: Cliff Munroe
427-2433

Alberta Agriculture appointments

Ryley has new district agriculturist

Yvonne Love is moving from a regional position in the northeast to take over as Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Ryley. "I'm looking forward to this new position in the County of Beaver and working with local producers," she says. Love had been the northeast regional 4-H specialist since September 1988. She also worked for the 4-H branch in various capacities after she graduated from the University of Alberta in 1986. Her degree is a BSc in agriculture with animal science as her major. As district agriculturist she will assist farmers, agribusiness and rural organizations with questions and concerns. Love was raised on a mixed farm in the Grande Prairie area. She can be reached in Ryley at 663-3555.

District agriculturist transfers to Fort Saskatchewan

Emile deMilliano is now the Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Fort Saskatchewan. After spending 10 years as the district agriculturist in Lamont, deMilliano spent a year and half on secondment with the department's marketing division. He says he's looking forward to serving farm clients in the Fort Saskatchewan district in an advisory and educational role. Raised on a dairy farm in the Calmar area, deMilliano is a 1980 graduate of the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program. He can be reached in Fort Saskatchewan at 998-0190.

Westlock has new district agriculturist

After spending two years as the Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Sedgewick, John Huffman is transferring to the Westlock district office. Soil conservation, and beef and crop concerns dominated his work in Sedgewick. "I look forward to the new challenges that await me in Westlock," he says. Originally from Saskatchewan, Huffman was raised on a wheat and hog farm near Rosetown in west central Saskatchewan. Huffman holds a BSc in agriculture degree from the University of Saskatchewan. His speciality was soil science. Huffman can be reached in Westlock at 349-4465.

Agri-News briefs

4-H scholarship deadline July 15

Former and current 4-H members planning to apply for 4-H scholarships must have their applications in to the 4-H branch by July 15. A total of 85 scholarships worth more than $55,000 will be awarded for the 1992-93 academic year. Criteria for the scholarships vary. While most are based on academic skills, community involvement and 4-H background, some are non-academic, based on leadership skills or by where applicants live in the province. All 4-Hers are encouraged to apply. Application forms are available from Alberta Agriculture regional offices, district home economists and the 4-H branch in Edmonton. For more information, contact Arron Madson or Lori McRae in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Beef producers introduce LIE SWATTER program

Individual beef producers will have the opportunity to get directly involved in responses to misinformation about their industry and environmental issues. The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) has introduced the "Lie Swatter" program and will promote it to Alberta's 30,000 beef producers during the next two months. Lie Swatter will rely on cattle producers and other industry members to act as the eyes and ears of the ACC to help monitor inaccurate coverage of the beef cattle industry. "Inaccurate information about the beef cattle industry and its role in the environment harms those of us making our living from the business, and all those around the world truly interested in a balanced and environmentally friendly agriculture and adequate supply of safe and nutritious food," says Tony Nichols, a cattle producer from Castor and the ACC's public affairs chairman. The ACC has assembled a wealth of background material on environmental

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issues and will help producers put together facts to respond to inaccurate reports or will respond directly on behalf of the industry. "The ACC has already responded to a number of incorrect stories as a result of our own media monitoring and producer prompted leads. The Lie Swatter program broadens this effort and will encourage all Alberta producers to get directly involved in promoting the facts about beef cattle production," he says. The ACC has also planned a series of tours for urban environmental media to beef cattle operations with backgrounding sessions from producers. The tours will complement the release of the updated "Just Facts" media kit. For more information, contact Nichols in Castor at 882-2343, or Joanne Lemke in Calgary at 275-4400.

Olds College takes on new livestock project

Boer goats are coming to Olds College. After six months of negotiations the college has signed a livestock management agreement with a New Zealand company to develop a herd of the exotic goats. A number of local recipient goats are now undergoing a conditioning process to prepare for embryo transplants in October. Landcorp Farming Limited is the largest farmer in New Zealand, has extensive experience in the goat industry and also has a strong genetic base. For more information, contact Barry Schmitt, Olds College farm manager, at 556-8389.

Consumption key to short term wheat price improvement

Currently there's little on the wheat supply side to bolster prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Barring disease problems in the U.S. winter wheat or a recurrence of drought concerns in a major spring wheat growing area, it looks as though price improvements in the short term will have to come from the consumption side of the equation," says Al Dooley. Dooley adds the $300 million export credit package for Russia with its $112 million allocation for wheat will be supportive to wheat markets. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Red fescue only excitement in forage seed market

Creeping red fescue continues to provide the only excitement in the forage seed market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "This market has been very active, supported by concerns over dryness in U.S. turf grass producing areas, particularly bluegrass areas," says Al Dooley. Producer prices for common fescue were reported at about 70 cents per pound in late May. "This price is much higher than a month earlier when a more common price was near 45 cents," he says. Fescue at 70 cents per pound is an historically attractive price he adds. The higher prices are having an impact on the market. "Our boreal is no longer competitive with Danish product in the U.K. and higher prices have also allowed Danish creeping red fescue to enter Eastern Canadian markets," he says. "As prices rise, fescue will face greater competition from other sources of supply, and buyers will look more actively for alternative, less expensive products to meet their needs." For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Oats market has potential

In feedgrain markets, oats still have the potential to heat up says an Alberta Agriculture market economist. Two factors contribute to that potential says Gisele Magnusson. Weather will remain an important factor in the U.S. "The USDA is predicting increased production, but acreage is down," she says. As well, production in Finland and Sweden is projected to decline as those countries adjust their farm programs. "Canadian on-farm stocks are the lowest in several years, and the general feeling remains that there will be good export opportunities for good quality oats," Magnusson says. For more information, contact Magnusson in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Alberta hog output growing

Alberta has now had two consecutive quarters of six per cent growth in hog output. "This is in contrast to the situation in most other provinces," says Ron Gietz, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The increased output reflects a dramatic increase in domestically slaughtered hogs and a sharp decline in exports." Slaughter hog production in Alberta could increase to 1989-90 levels this year, he says, if current production trends continue. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

NW regional conservation tour June 18

The County of Thorhild will be in the spotlight on June 18 for the annual northwest regional conservation tour. The day long tour with 11 different sites will showcase farm and home conservation techniques as well as farm diversification options. Deep plowing, saline soil reclamation, forage rejuvenation, water management, and herb, mushroom and game farming are all on the agenda. The day wraps up with supper and a guest speaker. For more information contact the Alberta Agriculture Thorhild district office at 398-3993, or to register call the Thorhild agricultural fieldman's office at 398-3741.

New toll-free line for grain commission

Alberta Grain Commission prices are now available on a toll-free information line. The toll-free number is 1-800-661-AGRI (2474). Callers in the Edmonton area are requested to use a local number, 436-4941 (as of June 8). The information line uses a menu just like the previous AGRI-NET system. Callers will be directed to press numbers for different price information. The market analysis branch's weekly summary will also be available on the system. Alberta Agriculture is planning to expand the messages available on the line in the future. For more information, contact Sharon McKinnon with the Alberta Grain Commission at 427-7329.

Tour takes students to auction ring

The Alberta Beef Congress plans to correct the problem of misinformation about the beef industry by giving 150 grade five Red Deer students an up close look. The students have been invited to attend the congress to meet beef producers and enjoy a hamburger lunch. As well, they'll take part in a real auction to learn about an integral part of the livestock sector. Students will receive an envelope of play money to use for bidding. To add to the realism, there'll be varying amount of money in the envelopes. The first Alberta Beef Congress runs from June 16 through 18 in Red Deer. Feature presentations for producers, demonstrations, trade show, livestock show and consumer program are among the activities at the congress. For more information, call the congress office at 347-4491.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

June 15, 1992

Isley and McClellan call for Hall of Fame nominations

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan are inviting the province's agricultural community to again submit nominations for the Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame.

"Hall of Fame induction is the greatest honor Alberta Agriculture can award to an individual," says Isley. "Past honorees have made a meaningful difference to their community and the agricultural industry."

"From farmer to researcher, our past inductees into the Hall of Fame have had in common their dedication to many areas of the agricultural industry within our province," adds McClellan.

Nominations for the 1993 Agriculture Hall of Fame must be received by July 31, 1992. Forms are available through Alberta Agriculture district offices or by writing to: Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame, Information Services Division, 100A 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Induction into the Hall of Fame is a distinction awarded to people who have played major roles in advancing agriculture in the province. Any Albertan who has made an outstanding contribution to agriculture at the local, provincial, national or international level may be eligible for admission.

Hall of Fame inductees for 1992 will be honored at a ceremony next March. The banquet and awards presentation traditionally coincides with the beginning of Agriculture Week in the province. Inductees are featured in a province-wide campaign highlighting this special week.

The Alberta Agriculture Hall of Fame is located on the main floor of department headquarters, the J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street in Edmonton.

Contact: *Bard Haddrell* *427-2127*
Brad Klak *427-2137*
Maureen Osadchuk *422-9156*

Be pesticide wise in your yard, too

While a dandelion patch or aphids on roses aren't as large an area to deal with as field spraying, pesticide safety measures are just as important in your yard and garden say two Alberta Agriculture specialists.

The first step is determining if you have a problem and what it is. "Not all insects are harmful, and if attacked some plants can recover from light infestations," says Pam North, a horticulturist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre.

Then comes choosing the correct product. "One pesticide won't control all problems, so selecting the right control is important. Use domestic pesticides for your yard and garden," she adds. These products have been selected and formulated specifically for lawn and garden use. "You shouldn't use a farm or commercial pesticide."

When purchasing a product, read the label, she adds. The label

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

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will detail rates and precautions. "Especially important if you're using a pesticide on a food crop, is how long to wait between spraying and harvesting."

While the label lists specific precautions, Bertha Eggertson, provincial clothing and textiles specialist, recommends protective clothing. "We've found farm wives do an excellent job of getting their husbands to wear protective clothing. We hope they won't forget the same safety standards when working with pesticides in their yards and gardens.

"You need to cover up to minimize your exposure, such as wearing long sleeved shirts and pants," she says. "This means no sun tanning while applying pesticides. Don't use latex rubber gloves and don't wear sandals or leather shoes." Unlined nitrile gloves and rubber boots are recommended.

Protective clothing should be kept specifically for that purpose and be washed immediately after use. Pesticide soiled clothing must be kept separate from regular wash. It should be washed twice in hot water with a heavy duty detergent and then line-dried.

The usual personal hygiene rules also apply she adds. Don't eat, drink or smoke when applying pesticides. Follow pesticide use with a shower including shampooing your hair.

Another precaution in the yard and garden is keeping pets and children away from the sprayed area. A 48 hour wait is recommended on lawns treated with a herbicide (24 hours after watering or rain).

For more information about pesticide use and protective clothing, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact:	*Pam North* *422-1789*	*Bertha Eggertson* *427-2412*

Container gardening adds color

Container gardening is a versatile way to add color to decks, patios and other nooks in a yard says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"There's a tremendous variety of container sizes and shapes in wood, plastic and clay. Plus, you can use unusual containers such as an old watering can or wheelbarrow," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

"An important consideration is the drainage in the container. If it's inadequate, the soil may get waterlogged and that can lead to root rot. Make drainage holes if the container doesn't have any," she adds.

Containers also offer versatility through the many type of plants that can be used. "The rules are simple," says North. Choose plants suitable for the location. When mixing annuals, size, color and texture should be complimentary. For a flowing appearance, plant low or hanging plants along the container's edge, tall plants at the back or middle, and medium size plants in between. Don't skimp on numbers, or you won't have a nice mass effect.

One of the other keys to successful container gardening is a good growing media. "It must hold moisture, drain well and allow oxygen to get to the plant roots. Garden soil alone isn't suitable. It's easy to make your own using one part soil, one part peat moss and one part perlite/vermiculite," she says. Prepackaged mixes are also available.

Regular fertilizing is also important. "Because the containers are watered frequently, nutrients are constantly leached out of the growing media. We recommend a water soluble 20-20-20 or 10-15-10 fertilizer," she says. Soil based media will need fertilizer every two to three weeks, soilless mixes more often. North says plant vigor will help determine when fertilizer is needed.

Many factors influence how often containers need to be watered including the container's size, what it's made from, plant size, growing media and the container's location. Allow the top half inch to inch to dry out between waterings. "Containers may dry out quickly, so check daily," she says.

Contact:	*Pam North* *422-1789*

Tradition ends, information goes on

A long standing tradition of the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks, an August field day, will change this year.

The annual field day, for home owners and amateur horticulturists, will not be held this summer. Fields days will now be held triennially, and the next will be in 1994. Instead, the center will emphasize service to visitors on a regular basis throughout the summer months says Tom Krahn, the center's director.

"Moving the field day to a triennial rotation will allow the center to provide visitors with new and different information. We'll modify its format to make it more attractive to visitors," he adds. The annual field day has attracted as many as 3,500 people.

Horticultural information will continue to be provided to the center's visitors and other Albertans. Through the center's information officer, general gardening information will be provided to the public. Alberta Agriculture will also continue its Master Gardener Program, operating from the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre (422-1880) in Edmonton. The program provides general horticultural information to the public through a network of knowledgeable volunteers.

As well, says Krahn, the Brooks center's popular walking tour through the grounds will be available, as will daytime tours of research plots.

"This change in the annual field day policy doesn't affect the level of service the center provides to the commercial horticultural and special crops sectors," says Krahn. "Commodity oriented field days, tours and general development assistance will be ongoing."

Contact:	*Tom Krahn* *362-3391*	*George Grainger* *422-1789*

Put safety first with ATVs

Whether using an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) for work or play, safety should always be the first consideration says Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager.

"Many farmers are making use of the versatile and easy to use ATVs in their daily work," says Solomon Kyeremanteng. "ATVs are also a very popular recreational vehicle."

Driver attitude is a key to preventing ATV accidents he adds. "An ATV isn't a toy, even if you're using it for recreation," he stresses. "And, don't put safety aside if you're doing farm chores with your ATV. As multipurpose and fun as they are, they can be dangerous if not used properly. That includes not riding double. There shouldn't be more than one person aboard an ATV at any one time."

Circumstances in many accidents show a lack of training, supervision or not following manufacturers' recommendations related to the size of the ATV and the age of the operator. While Alberta Agriculture doesn't have an ATV safety program, the Alberta Safety Council has instructors across the province who will teach ATV safety. Courses are available for both recreational and industrial users.

Proper equipment is one part of the training courses. A helmet, face shield or goggles, gloves, over ankle boots, and appropriate clothing including long pants, long sleeved shirt and or jacket are recommended.

Supervising children using an ATV is also important he adds. "Not only should children be supervised, but they shouldn't ride a machine beyond their capabilities. For example it's recommended children over six should operate ATVs with an engine size of less than 70 cc. At 12 years of age or older they can move up to an engine size between 70 and 90 cc."

Anyone interested in an ATV user course should contact the Alberta Safety Council in Edmonton at 428-7555.

Contact: *Solomon Kyeremanteng*
427-2186

Founder recognized, 4-H cairn rededicated for 75th anniversary

The Alberta 4-H movement's founder will be inducted into the Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame on July 7 at Olds College. William J. Elliott was the first principal of Olds College and started the province's first 4-H club, a swine club in the Olds area in 1917. Along with Elliott's induction, a 4-H cairn erected on the college grounds in 1967 will also be rededicated at the 8 p.m. ceremony.

"The cairn was originally constructed and dedicated to celebrate the 50th anniversary of 4-H in Alberta," says Mahlon Weir of Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch. As part of the rededication, a new plaque for the 75th anniversary will be unveiled. "Again as in 1967, a tree will be planted. These trees symbolize the continued growth of the 4-H movement," he says.

The ceremonies are open to the public he adds. Invited guests will include 4-H Club Week delegates and staff (Club Week runs from July 6-12); members of the Alberta 4-H Council; and, incoming delegates for an interprovincial 4-H exchange program. Sharon Dyer, Olds 4-H Multi Club leader, is co-ordinating local planning and hosting.

Contact: *Mahlon Weir* *Sharon Dyer*
422-4444224-3832

Now it's hoe, hoe, hoe

Conservation and community service teamed up as the 2nd Airdrie Boy Scouts took on a field shelterbelt project this spring.

They started by planting five half mile lengths of caragana and green ash tree rows on a Beiseker farmer's land last month. Their project is in co-operation with the Municipal District of Rocky View and John Timmermans, Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist in Airdrie.

"The Boy Scouts' goals are environmental stewardship and community service," says Timmermans, "Demonstrating a field shelterbelt system was the goal the municipality and I had in mind. Co-operating farmer John Richter wanted to reduce the high risk of wind erosion on some of his sandy land."

All of the scout troop and its leaders took part in planting. Their project involvement doesn't stop there, as the group will be on weed control detail. Through the spring and summer they will be out with their hoes about four times says Timmermans. Also as part of the project, the scouts will record the average summer growth and the survival rate of the two tree species.

"Everybody wins in this situation," says Timmermans of the project. "It's a learning experience for the scouts, the project promotes conservation in general, it helps Mr. Richter in particular, and the total benefits eventually accrue to all of us."

Richter is also supplying the site for an end-of-the-project barbeque and making a donation to the Scouts for their work.

Contact: *John Timmermans*
948-8539

Alberta Agriculture appointments

Fort Vermilion has new district agriculturist

Don Lobay is the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Fort Vermilion. "I am looking forward to working and learning in an area of Alberta that many people don't associate with agricultural production," says Lobay, who most recently was district agriculturist in Two Hills. "Working out of the Fort Vermilion office will give me the opportunity to contribute to a geographic agricultural area unique from any other in Western Canada." Before joining the department, Lobay worked for an agricultural chemical company and as a diagnostician at the Alberta Environment Centre in Vegreville. Originally from Smoky Lake, Lobay is a 1982 graduate of the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program. He can be reached in Fort Vermilion at 927-3712.

New district agriculturist in Airdrie

Andrea Church has changed duties from regional 4-H specialist to become the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Airdrie. During her three years as Calgary regional 4-H specialist, Church says she had the opportunity to work with the agricultural community in a program that strengthens leadership, communication and personal skills. "The 4-H program taught me more than what I was able to contribute to it," she says. "I will again be working with the agriculture community and have a chance to learn more about the technical side of agriculture as well as put my education to work. I look forward to meeting the producers in the Rockyview district and invite them to drop by the office when they are in the Airdrie area." Church graduated from the University of Alberta with a BSc in agriculture. She specialized in animal science and range management. The Airdrie area has always been her home. She grew up on a mixed farm in the Yankee Valley area east of Airdrie. Church was active in 4-H, participating in beef, light horse and junior leader projects over eight years in the program. She can be reached in Airdrie at 948-8551.

New district agriculturist in Sedgewick

Trevor Yurchak has taken his skills as an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist south to Sedgewick. Most recently Yurchak was district agriculturist in Fort Saskatchewan and previously held the same position in Athabasca. He got his first experience with the department as a summer assistant in his home district of Lamont in 1988 and worked in the same position in Vegreville during the summer of 1990. "As district agriculturist I can provide producers with the information and guidance needed to sustain a viable farm operation," he says. Yurchak is a 1990 graduate of the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program. He was raised on his family's mixed farm north of Lamont. He can be reached in Sedgewick at 384-3737.

Eaglesham has new district agriculturist

Doug Moisey has headed north to the Peace Country to be the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Eaglesham. "I'm looking forward to working with and assisting producers of Improvement District 19 with their farm needs," he says. Moisey began training as a district agriculturist in Two Hills in 1989, spent a year there and moved on to the same duties in the Westlock district office. A 1985 graduate of the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program, Moisey grew up in St. Albert and gained experience on his family's farms as well as working for producers. He can be reached in Eaglesham at 359-3828.

Agri-News briefs

Ag census finds slighter fewer farms in Alberta

A downward trend in the number of farms on the Prairies has continued, but Alberta had only one per cent fewer farms in the 1991 census of agriculture than in 1986. There were 57,245 farms in 1991 compared to 57,777 in 1986 and 62,702 in 1971. Results from the agriculture census were released earlier this month. "Our statistics branch staff will be looking at the census in more detail, and will report on particular Alberta trends," says David Walker, head of Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch.

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Over 41 per cent of all Alberta farms were classified as cattle farms, he notes, and the average size of Alberta farms is 898 acres. Both pig and chicken farming has become more concentrated. Twenty years ago about 40 per cent of farms reported having pigs and chickens. In 1991 10.7 per cent of farms had pigs and 15.5 per cent had chickens. Nearly 40,000 of Alberta farmers reported taking soil erosion control measures. Family farms continue to account for most Canadian farms he adds. In 1991 family-operated farms accounted for 98 per cent of all farms, non-family corporations for just over one per cent and the remainder were institutional farms, community pastures and Hutterite colonies. As in the past three censuses, one-quarter of census farms generated three-quarters of gross farm receipts. Information about census publications and from the census is available from Statistics Canada regional reference centres.

Cream of crop competition won by Seven Persons farmer

Lavern Kurpjuweit can claim his forage is the cream of the crop as his legume hay earned him the challenge trophy as the best forage sample submitted to the 1992 Alberta Dairy Congress forage competition. This was the second consecutive year the challenge trophy went to the winner of the legume hay class. Kurpjuweit also placed second in the grass hay class and fourth in the haylage class. Other class winners were J.P Varderveen of Calmar in grass-legume hay mixture, Brian Houweling of Coaldale in grass hay and haylage classes and Steve Visscher of Legal in the cereal silage class. The top five placings in each of the five competition classes were on display at the congress in Leduc. More than 60 entries from across the province were in the competition. For more information, contact the Alberta Dairy Congress office at 986-8108, or the Alberta Agriculture district office in Leduc at 986-8985.

Mixed news in May weather

May precipitation made many of the province's farmers happy, while southern Alberta farmers are still waiting for rain says an Alberta Agriculture weather resource specialist. "The rain and a spring snow storm improved surface soil moisture levels and provided good germination conditions in central Alberta. Normal rainfall amounts during the rest of the spring season are needed to assure good crop yields," says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton. Above normal precipitation amounts are needed in southern Alberta where conditions remain very dry he adds. During May precipitation in agricultural areas of the province varied from 7.4 mm at Manyberries—only 18 per cent of its normal—to 118.3 mm at Rocky Mountain House, 196 per cent of normal. Most of southern Alberta, and some parts of northern and central Alberta reported only between seven and 18 mm of precipitation, less than half of the normal amount for May. South central Alberta reported between 40 and 120 mm, ranging from about normal to almost double the normal for May. May's average temperature in northern and central Alberta was one to two degrees below normal. In southern Alberta monthly temperatures were one degree below normal to 1.2$C above normal. For more information, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

U of A creates ag marketing and business chair

A co-operative chair in agricultural marketing and business has been established in the University of Alberta's department of rural economy within the faculty of agriculture and forestry. The chair was created to build on the already strong bridge between the faculty and extension education, co-operative marketing and business management organizations; to strength the research arm of the faculty; and, to expand the faculty's teaching area to ensure undergraduates and graduate students benefit from the expanding knowledge in the area of marketing strategies and business management. The new chair will also expand the linkages between the faculty of agriculture and forestry and the university's faculty of business. A search for an incumbent will begin soon, and it's expected the position will be filled by September 1993. Funding for the chair totals $1.75 million over a five year period. For more information contact: Bill Phillips, chair, department of rural economy, 492-4228; Ed Schultz, general manager, Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation, 474-8288; or, Sandra Halme, office of public affairs, 492-0442.

"Seeds of knowledge" July 8-10

The Canadian Seed Growers' Association is holding its annual meeting at Guelph July 8 through 10. Titled, "Seeds of knowledge", the conference will address research, international trade, competitiveness, education, agriculture and food industry co-operation, and new market and product development. The conference itself will take place at the University of Guelph and a variety of conference tours are available. The Thursday evening social is a trip to Toronto's Skydome to see the Blue Jays. For more information, contact Doug McLaren at (519)767-3178.

Range management society meets in Utah

The summer meeting of the Society for Range Management (SRM) will be held in Park City, Utah July 15 through 22. The meeting will centre around the theme of rangelands and shifting values. A day long workshop on July 16 will centre on this theme. Tours will go to the Deseret Land and Livestock Company, where management includes wildlife and livestock, and the Strawberry Valley where rangeland and riparian restoration have been ongoing. The meeting is open to anyone interested in rangelands

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and its resources. For information on membership, or additional details on the SRM meeting, call (303)355-7070.

Pork congress honors producer, herdsman, leadership

The 1992 "stars of pork" were recognized during the 1992 Alberta Pork Congress. The pork producers of the year were Brian and Joyce Carlson of Gwynn. The Carlsons operate a 90 sow farrow to finish operation and their farm enterprise also includes beef, grain, hay and ostriches. Thomas Kennelly of Edgerton was named the 1992 herdsman of the year. Kennelly manages a 500 sow farrow to finish operation at the Rosedale Hog Ranch. The industry leadership award went to Austin Murray who has been at the Agriculture Canada research station in Lacombe since 1977. His current work involves evaluating laboratory methods for live-animal detection of stress susceptible pigs. The two day congress also included swine shows, a trade show, social events and a variety of educational sessions. For more information, contact the congress office in Red Deer at 340-5307.

AIA meets in Grande Prairie June 18-20

The Alberta Institute of Agrologists (AIA) will hold its 46th annual conference in Grande Prairie June 18 through 20. Diversification will be highlighted through speakers and tours. The conference will be held at Grande Prairie Regional College. For more information, contact Bob Anderson in Grande Prairie at 532-4790 or Bill Charlton in Edmonton at 448-6819.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

June 22, 1992

People the danger in bringing Dutch elm disease to Alberta

Alberta is still free from Dutch elm disease, but the risk of the disease reaching here is more real than it has ever been before, and people will likely be the disease's carrier says an Alberta Agriculture plant pathologist.

"Because Alberta is isolated in a geographic sense, there is no way for the disease to spread naturally from tree to tree. Nor are elms native to Alberta, so the disease vectors don't exist here naturally," says Jim Holley, diagnostician at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "But the disease is in Montana and Saskatchewan, and could be brought here in infected firewood or nursery stock."

Eight infestations have been identified in Saskatchewan he notes. Some were from natural spread, others such as a campsite at Shaunavon, in southwestern Saskatchewan, were brought into the area by people who carried infected firewood with them.

Control is easier between Alberta and Montana because there's a physical barrier of the border and people are asked about firewood when going through customs Holley says. All firewood coming into Canada from the U.S. is now confiscated at the border. He adds some American elm logs confiscated at the border have had evidence of the beetles and fungus.

The same control doesn't exist at the Alberta-Saskatchewan provincial border. Signs along major routes make people aware of the firewood quarantine policy. "However, our worst fear is that people will be the vector (carrier) by bringing in infected firewood. We hope all Albertans who go camping in points east and south won't bring any firewood back with them," he says.

"One thing to note is, because the infestations are closer to southern Alberta, that doesn't mean the disease would most likely show up in the south first. Northern Alberta wouldn't be immune because people are the likely carriers. There is more of risk where populations are the highest, so the disease could just as easily show up in Edmonton as Calgary," he says.

Currently major cities across the province monitor for Dutch elm disease with sticky traps and pheromone lures in strategic locations. This includes Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Calgary, Red Deer, Edmonton and Lloydminster. "All the traps were clear and clean last year and we want it to stay that way," Holley says.

Many Alberta cities and towns have elms along boulevards and in parks. Large trees would take 30 to 50 years to regenerate. "By taking precautions, primarily by leaving firewood behind, those stands can be maintained for all of us to enjoy," he says.

Dutch elm disease is a very deadly wilt disease causing American and Siberian elm trees to die back completely in three to five years. It has already destroyed all native elm stands east of Winnipeg. The disease has also destroyed most of the trees in Great Falls, Montana.

The disease is caused by the fungus, **Ceratocystic ulmi**, and is spread by native and European elm bark beetles. Beetles living under the bark of diseased logs fly to healthy surrounding trees, bore underneath the bark, hollow out galleries and deposit fungal spores in healthy wood as they feed. The fungus grows into the water conducting system of the tree and eventually plugs it. Without water from its roots, leaves on affected limbs turn yellow, wilt and then fall off.

Since the fungus grows under the bark, there is no practical way to treat trees once they are infected. Systemic fungicides can be

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pumped into the root systems, but the application is too time consuming and expensive to be used on a large scale. Healthy trees can be sprayed to protect them from feeding beetles. "The best solution," says Holley, "is prevention."

Holley's advice to Albertans who camp outside of Alberta is to leave all bark covered logs behind them when they return to the province.

Contact: Dr. Jim Holley
362-3391

Fresh, prepared foods possible with MAP

Imagine preparing a Caesar, spinach or iceberg lettuce salad by simply opening a bag and adding the dressing with all the washing, chopping and tossing already done for you.

This scenario is the result of years of research spurred by consumer demand for fresh prepared foods says Murray Fierheller of Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc.

Fierheller, who works with modified atmospheric packaging (MAP), says the process has already been used by many Alberta food processors during the last 10 to 15 years. Currently MAP—also known as gas packaging or pillow packaging—is used for a wide variety of fresh food such as bulk fresh pork, processed meats, sandwiches, fresh pasta, fresh produce and baked goods.

"In most cases the consumer is unaware that the atmosphere inside a package has been modified," he says.

MAP can increase a product's shelf life by as much as two to three times more than conventional atmospheric packaging he adds. "As the demand for fresh prepared food increases, so will the use of MAP as a method to achieve the shelf life required to market these products," he predicts. Besides the ready-to-serve or premixed salad, ethnic style entrées could be another new product using this technology.

The MAP technology involves changing atmospheric conditions of high oxygen to an atmosphere containing high carbon dioxide and often low oxygen. Carbon dioxide, the same gas used in carbonated beverages, is very effective in preventing mold growth and inhibiting bacteria species that cause strong "off" odors associated with spoiled foods.

"MAP products still spoil, but the off odors and flavors are sour because the associated bacteria produce lactic acid. These bacteria are a type similar to those used for cultured dairy products such as yoghurt and cheese," he notes.

Fierheller says MAP isn't immune from the dangers of poor refrigeration, or "temperature abuse". "Unsuitable temperatures will cause all fresh foods to spoil faster regardless of the type of packaging. A MAP product that has been improperly stored is more likely to like a football, show signs of mold growth or have a strong sour odor, than cause food poisoning."

Pathogenic—food poisoning—bacteria are a concern if temperatures exceed 8°C to 10°C for a long period of time. The higher the temperature, the shorter the time required for pathogenic bacteria to reach hazardous levels.

"MAP doesn't improve the situation during temperature abuse, but it doesn't make it worse," he adds.

For more information about the modified atmospheric packing process, contact Fierheller in Leduc at 986-4793.

Contact: Murray Fierheller
986-4793

Pasture pumping system pays

Alberta cattle producers are finding it often pays to install a water pumping system from their pasture dugouts says an Alberta Agriculture engineering technologist.

"The addition of a low cost watering system could improve your cattle production as pumping systems prevent many problems caused by watering cattle directly from a dugout," says the Barrhead based Bob Buchanan.

Loss in dugout water storage caused by cattle trampling in the dugout's sides is one of those problems. Another is water quality deterioration from silt and manure. Leg and foot injuries can be caused by muddy conditions around a dugout. As well, cattle production can drop with poor quality water and poor access to water.

To look more closely at the advantages of a pumping system, the Pembina Forage Association started a demonstration project in 1990. "Over the past two summers the system has worked very well. Cattle prefer to drink from the tank and the dugout's water quality has improved," he says.

The pumping system has a five horsepower gas pump plus hoses, an elevated water reservoir, circular stock tank with cement pad and one and one half inch water pipes plus a stock tank valve. The system was easy to install and cost about $2,000. The low cost system was designed by Alberta Agriculture's engineering services branch.

Buchanan says the 10,000 gallon reservoir provides the necessary storage between fills with the gas pump. Elevated at about five feet to provide the necessary gravity flow to the stock tank, the reservoir is filled approximately once a week.

For more information on dugouts and all types of pumping systems, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district or regional office.

Contact: Bob Buchanan
674-8252

Beware the undercooked hamburger

While we aren't immune to "hamburger disease" any time of the year, the barbeque season is a particular time when people should take care says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"A safe hamburger shouldn't have even a touch of pink," says Aileen Whitmore, of the home economics branch in Edmonton.

Undercooked hamburger carries with it the potential of a type of food poisoning commonly referred to as "hamburger disease" or "barbeque syndrome". Thorough cooking will destroy the **E. coli** bacteria associated with this type of food poisoning.

"That means the centre of a hamburger patty is brown and juices are clear. And this should apply not only to your home cooking, but also when you eat at a restaurant," she says.

While hamburger tops the list as a potential source of **E. coli**, it isn't the only candidate. The list includes all types of meat—the bacteria is usually found on the surface of all raw meats—and raw milk. Hamburger is more likely to be contaminated with this bacteria than other meats as during its grinding process surface contaminants spread through the uncooked ground meat.

Whitmore says how people handle food could cause food poisoning at any time. "Preventing this type of food poisoning requires safe food handling and preparation all the time," she stresses.

Safety starts with choosing fresh products at the grocery store. Refrigerate or freeze meat as soon as possible after purchase. Frozen meat should be thawed in the refrigerator or microwave, but not at room temperature. Raw hamburger patties, and other meats, should be prepared quickly, cooked right away or put in the refrigerator.

"Raw meats shouldn't be allowed to sit at room temperature, but just as important, once meat is cooked, serve it quickly because the environment is right for bacterial growth when the food's temperature goes below 60°C. Keep your hot food hot and put leftovers in the refrigerator promptly," she says.

Cleanliness is another important factor in preventing food poisoning. "One of the biggest mistakes people make, especially when barbecuing, is putting cooked meat on the same plate the raw food was on. You kill the bacteria by cooking, then turn around and recontaminate the food with raw juices. Always put cooked food on a clean plate," she advises.

Utensils, cutting boards and counters must be washed with hot soapy water and sterilized to prevent bacteria from contacting other foods. To sterilize add a little bleach to the water. As well, cooks need to wash their hands well after handling raw meat.

Whitmore says a common question people ask is whether the "pink test" applies to steak. "Because the bacteria is usually harboured on the meat's surface, the pink centre of a rare or medium steak shouldn't be dangerous as long as the outside of the steak has been cooked."

Hamburger disease is a gastrointestinal illness caused by **E. coli** bacteria. The bacteria produces a poison, or toxin, that damages the intestine's lining and results in hemorrhagic colitis. Symptoms include severe stomach cramps, bloody diarrhea and a mild fever two to eight days after eating contaminated food. Anyone with those symptoms should contact their physician.

Most people recover from the illness within two weeks. In a very small number of cases, the **E. coli** toxin results in a serious, sometimes fatal complication, Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (HUS). This kidney failure is especially dangerous to young children, the chronically ill and the elderly.

For more information on safe food handling and preparation, contact any Alberta Agriculture district home economist, or Whitmore in Edmonton at 427-2412.

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

Picnics have food safety challenge

Keeping cold foods cold and hot foods hot is a simple food safety rule people shouldn't ignore when they head away from their kitchens for a picnic.

After 20 minutes at room temperature bacteria begin to grow in both hot and cold foods. After two hours of foods sitting at room temperature, there could be a serious problem. "When you leave the advantages of the refrigerator in your kitchen, you need to be especially careful," says Linda St. Onge, an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"In the summer there's a real challenge in keeping cold foods cold," she adds. "Bacteria can take advantage of the warm weather, just as you want to be outside when it's nice."

One way to meet that challenge is to thoroughly chill fresh foods before packing them. "Don't expect the impossible from a cooler," she adds. "Coolers are made to keep foods cool, not to make them cool. Choose a good cooler and use it properly."

Coolers should be well insulated, form a tight seal when closed and have a rust-proof interior. Vinyl insulated bags and styrofoam ice chests are fine for short periods, such as an hour or two, but aren't recommended for longer time periods.

Also prechill coolers before packing food in them. Fill with ice or ice water and allow the cooler to stand for an hour. To keep foods cool, put a layer of ice on the bottom of the cooler and pack ice blocks around foods.

"Freeze juice boxes to make 'edible freezer packs'," she suggests. "This can really make the most of your cooler space.

Since the bottom of the cooler is coldest, pack perishable foods there and eat them first. For best cooling, leave room for air to circulate inside the cooler. If the meal is near a lake or stream, use a water proof hamper and put it in the water, or find a shady place for the cooler. Finally, open the cooler only when necessary.

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Questions about salad and mayonnaise are common during the picnic season St. Onge adds. A frequent misconception is that if mayonnaise hasn't been added to the salad, then there's no problem with how the salad is stored. Not so, she says. "Harmful bacteria prefer a low acid environment such as meat, eggs, dairy products and vegetables. Mayonnaise is acidic and helps prevent bacteria growth, but its extra moisture does promote bacteria growth. What this means is that with or without mayonnaise, potato, meat, fish or pasta salads still must be kept cold."

Food safety starts before packing a picnic. Always handle food carefully she says. "Make sure your hands, utensils and work surfaces are clean. Prevent cross-contamination by cleaning cutting boards between uses and not putting cooked meat on a plate used for raw meat."

For more information on safe food handling and preparation, contact any Alberta Agriculture district home economist or St. Onge in Edmonton at 427-2412.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Frame your compost pile

Compost piles are popping up in back yards all over Alberta, but eager composters often have questions about their environmentally conscious practice says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Many gardeners have been composting for years because it provides a way to enrich their soil," says Pam North, a horticulturist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre.

Through the composting process, raw organic material is converted into a useful soil additive. When added to the soil, it loosens soil and makes it easier to work. As well, putting organic "garbage" into a compost pile instead of conventional garbage disposal contributes to a better environment.

Building a frame for the compost pile is recommended. "This keeps the pile neater and more compact," she says. The frame can be built from a variety of materials. Cedar or untreated wood can be used to make the basic frame. Sides can be either plywood or wire. The compost dries out more quickly with wire sides, she says. While the frame should hold about a cubic metre, it's not recommended that the structure be any deeper than about 1.5 metres (about five feet) she says.

Most kitchen scraps are suitable for the compost pile. Those scraps include vegetable peelings, egg shells, tea bags and coffee grounds. "But don't add meat and dairy products," she says. Garden refuse such as grass clippings and leaves can also be used in the compost pile. All large pieces of material can be chopped or shredded to speed up decomposition.

North has two precautions. "It's not recommended to use diseased plant materials in the compost pile. As well, if you've used a herbicide on your lawn to kill dandelions or other weeds, cut the lawn at least twice before using clippings in the compost pile," she says.

Materials may be layered 15 to 20 cm deep. "Sprinkle about a quarter inch of soil between layers to add microbes that will speed up decomposition. A compost starter or fertilizer such as 21-0-0 or 16-20-0 will also aid decomposition," she says.

Turning the pile once a week to add oxygen is important to the decay process. As well, turning brings outer materials into the center and speeds up decomposition. To work best, the pile should be kept moist, she says, but it shouldn't be soggy.

Composting is a relatively slow process. "If you start a compost pile this spring, it should be ready to spread over your garden by the following spring or fall," says North.

A reprint of an Environmental Council of Alberta fact sheet on home composting is available by writing Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 537-1.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Agri-News briefs

4-H delegates travelling to Manitoba

Ten Alberta 4-Hers will be flying to Manitoba on June 30 to attend the 1992 Western Provinces Seminar in Brandon. Tamara Bertschy of Milo, Charlene Brennan of Forestburg, Tanya Gano of Crossfield, Janice Hlady of Fort Saskatchewan, Jaydon McRae of Coronation, Debbie Detryshen of Westlock, Crista Stringer of Sunnynook, Adrienne Ulrich of Medicine Hat, Kim Webber of Stony Plain and Greg Wedman of Wetaskiwin are the Alberta delegates. Along with 4-Hers from the other three western provinces, the Albertans will focus on developing an understanding of the challenges in an sustainable agriculture system. Delegates will return to Alberta on July 5. The trip is sponsored by the Farm Credit Corporation, the Institute of Sustainable Development and the Canadian Agri-Food Development Initiative. Alberta delegates were chosen to attend the seminar at the annual provincial 4-H selections program held

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in early May. Trip awards are based on community and 4-H involvement as well as interpersonal skills. For more information, contact Marguerite Stark at 948-8510 or Janice Taylor at 948-8514 in Airdrie.

Soil moisture management on video

If you take care of your root zone, you're taking care of your crop is the message of one of Alberta Agriculture's newest videos. "Soil moisture management: the root of the matter" (VT 550) is now available at all Alberta Agriculture district video libraries. The 21 minute video examines the relationship between soil, plants and climate, and moisture balance in crop root zones. Alberta farmers from various soil zones discuss how they manage their soil's reservoir. The presentation notes practices best suited to one soil zone might not be appropriate in another. The video is also available for loan by writing Alberta Agriculture's Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Hort week at Olds College July 19-24

Olds College 28th annual hort week runs July 19 through 24 at the college. Among the activities are floral design schools, business programs, horticultural seminars and workshops, horticultural judging schools, and a poinsettia greenhouse growers' workshop. Courses range in length from one day to several. As well, three free evening seminars will be offered July 20 through 22. One discusses horticulture in Costa Rica, the second the world of lilies and the third is a stroll through campus to look at its perennials. An early bird registration discount is available before June 30. For more information, contact Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

Breton plots field day July 3

Developing a farm conservation plan is the theme of the 1992 Breton plots field day. The field day runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on July 3 at the Unversity of Alberta's plots near the community of Breton. Speakers from the University of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture will present talks on conservation planning and restoring and maintaining soil productivity. Weather permitting, plot tours will be held in the afternoon. Lunch will be available on-site. The university's department of soil science is celebrating 63 years of experimental work at that site. The plots, some of the oldest long term research plots in the world, are situated on Gray Luvisolic (wooded) soils that are low in sulphur, nitrogen and organic matter. Originally designed to find a system of cropping suitable for Luvisolic soils, they now serve a more important function of showing how different cropping practices have affected the soil. Breton is located about 100 km southwest of Edmonton (west on Highway 39 and south on Highway 20). For more information, contact Jim Robertson, department of soil science, at 492-3242 or 492-0191.

Phone (403) 427-2101

AGRI-NEWS

June 29, 1992

Use right hat for sun protection

The traditional baseball style hat farmers favor isn't a good all around protection during peak sun exposure hours says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Baseball hats don't shield the back of neck and ears, both areas where skin cancer often appears," says Bertha Eggertson, provincial clothing and textiles specialist. "And, farmers need to be concerned because they are in one of the risk groups for skin cancer."

Skin cancer from sun exposure is widely recognized. The Canadian Dermatology Association says this year more than 47,000 Canadians will discover they have skin cancer. As well, the incidence of skin cancer in Canada is rising and anyone born today faces a one in seven chance of getting skin cancer during their lifetime.

"Recognition is also growing in the agriculture industry," adds Eggertson. "Skin cancer from sun exposure was one of the major topics at a recent farm safety conference in Saskatoon."

As people who spend a lot of time outdoors, farmers fit into at least one of the major skin cancer risk categories. Sun induced damage to the skin adds up year after year and research shows the more skin is exposed to the sun, the more likely a person will develop skin cancer.

Other risk factors are fair skin that burns easily and rarely tans; a personal or family history of skin cancer; a high number of moles, large moles, or moles with unusual color; and, several blistering sunburns during childhood or teenage years.

The U.S. National Farm Medicine Centre in Wisconsin studied farmers and hats. The farmers rated hats on a number of factors including their comfort, practicality, cost and appearance. A dermatologist also rated the hats for their sun protection qualities.

"This study didn't find a perfect hat," notes Eggertson. "Farmers rated a modified baseball cap with a protective, removable back flap best. Their second choice was a front and rear billed cap. The experts point out both these hats allow too much exposure at the temple."

Researchers, on the other hand, like pith helmets. However, farmers found they weren't practical for some farm work. She adds experts suggest a hat with a minimum three inch brim on all sides.

Hats aren't the only recommended protection from the sun. Long sleeved shirts and pants and sunscreen are also recommended. The Alberta Cancer Board and the Canadian Cancer Society both have pamphlets and other information related to sun sense.

Contact: *Bertha Eggertson*
427-2412

JUL 1 4 1992

Farmers should cover up from sun

Because their work takes them outside during the day when the sun's ultraviolet rays are the strongest, farmers should take care to prevent sun damage.

"Dermatologists and cancer experts say the best way to protect your skin from the sun is to stay out of the sun from the period between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.—daylight savings time," says Bertha Eggertson, an Alberta Agriculture specialist. "Farmers don't have that option if they have field work to do, so they should follow

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

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good sun sense, especially since being outdoors puts them in one of the risk groups for skin cancer," she adds.

Covering up is the first rule. This includes a loose, long sleeved shirt, long pants or skirt and a broad brimmed hat. Eggertson notes tightly woven fabrics are recommended as the sun can penetrate anything that can be seen through.

"For many farmers an appropriate hat is a change from what they usually wear," she adds. Experts recommend broad brimmed hats. Baseball style caps only protect the front of the head leaving the neck and ears vulnerable. "In one U.S. study a modified baseball cap with a detachable back flap for the neck was rated best by the farmers. So far, the perfect hat hasn't been found that meets both protection and practical needs," Eggertson says.

Using a good screen is another sun smart rule. The sun screen should have a sufficient sun protection factor (SPF) to protect from burning. Sun screens with a SPF of 15 or higher are recommended by the Canadian Dermatology Association for all exposed areas of the skin. (Sunscreens evaluated by the association bear its logo.) Sunscreens should be applied 15 to 30 minutes before going out in the sun and reapplied frequently, about every two hours.

The Canadian Cancer Society and the Alberta Cancer Board both have pamphlets on sun safety. The American Cancer Board has produced a pamphlet directed specifically at farmers.

Contact: *Bertha Eggertson*
427-2412

Barley proposal released

Alberta's Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley has released a detailed proposal to open the Canada-United States border to private sales of Canadian barley into the United States, as well as sales by the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB).

The proposal is titled "A proposal for a North American continental market for barley". The current system allows the CWB complete control over barley and wheat sales from Canada to export markets.

"This proposal offers a number of advantages over the current system," says Isley. "An open border for barley would provide immediate cash flow benefits to farmers from a United States market that has been a premium market for over a decade. The proposed system takes nothing away from farmers who prefer to market through the board and offers expanded opportunities for farmers who want to market their own barley."

Isley adds this proposal capitalizes on the benefits of the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement and follows the federal government's pillars for reform of Canadian agricultural policy of market responsiveness, greater self-reliance and regional diversity.

Isley and the Honourable Charles Mayer, federal minister of state responsible for grains and oilseeds, have discussed the issue of a North American continental market for barley. "The arguments on both sides of the issue have been addressed; the opportunities are there and farmers are ready to do business when the regulatory barriers come down," says Isley.

Copies of the proposal are available upon request from the Alberta Grain Commission.

Contact: *Brian Downey* *Ken Beswick*
427-7329 *427-2417*
Brad Klak
427-2137

"Sensible" response to consumer health concerns

Health conscious consumers are increasing pressure on the food industry to maintain high quality standards while reducing fat, cholesterol, salt and other food components.

"That's not an easy request, but it can be done," says Robert Gibson, a meat project officer at Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc.

Removing the fat from a meat product, for example, not only increases the meat's cost, but more importantly alters the texture and flavor of the meat. So, alternative ingredients and processing procedures must be developed to provide those sensory characteristics.

Fat is largely responsible for the juiciness of cooked meat. To maintain juicy texture in a low fat meat product, water is added in combination with a fat replacer explains Gibson. "This ingredient is designed to hold water in the meat during processing to provide the same juiciness and mouth feel the consumer expects." He adds extra adjustments for flavor, appearance and cost may also be needed.

After two years of extensive research the centre did help one client develop a line of meat with reduced fat, cholesterol and/or salt. The client, Gainers Inc., launched the result—its "Sensible" line—in the spring of 1991. "Sales have continued to grow," says Gibson, "indicating good consumer acceptance of these products."

The "Sensible" line also has been endorsed by the food industry. Retail and wholesale buyers and merchandisers voted it one of Canada's most outstanding new grocery products. As well, the line will be considered as a Canadian entry in the International New Product Award Competition in Paris, France this fall.

Gibson adds developing new products to meet ever changing wants and needs of consumers is essential to a food company's long term growth and security.

For more information, contact Gibson in Leduc at 986-4793.

Contact: *Robert Gibson*
986-4793

Try beetles for biological control

Beetles are one way to battle the problem weeds leafy spurge and bladder campion says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Two types of leafy spurge beetles and a tortoise beetle are proving their worth as an alternative to herbicides says Dan Cole, supervisor of integrated weed control with the department's crop protection branch. The beetles are being evaluated by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Environmental Centre.

"This type of biological control has many advantages for these types of persistent weeds," he says. "The beetles provide an on-going, year-to-year control and can be used in sensitive areas such as near water."

Leafy spurge isn't native to Canada, but was introduced here from Eastern Europe. Cattle don't eat it and avoid areas where it grows. It's very competitive with grasses, and is difficult and costly to control.

Like the weed, the beetles also come from Europe. Once established on a patch of leafy spurge, the beetles can have a significant effect on the weed in two to five years. The two types of beetles are each suited for different terrain. The black dot spurge beetle, originally from Hungary, is better for higher, drier, more exposed sites on sandy soil. Moister, shaded leafy spurge is better tackled by the copper spurge beetle, from Italy. While the copper beetle is currently being evaluated, shaded and low lying areas near water seem to be good locations for this beetle.

Cole notes the beetles provide control and not eradication. "The spurge beetles won't eat themselves out of house and home. As a continuing control, they bring the weed to a low enough level that it doesn't interfere with normal land use, such as grazing, plus there aren't ongoing control costs." He adds extensive tests have shown the beetles won't damage cultivated or native plants.

Bladder campion is a deep-rooted perennial weed. Also known as cow-bell, rattleweed and bladder silene, this persistent weed is common along roadsides, waste places and gravel pits. Once established, bladder campion crowds out cultivated or desirable plants and is difficult to eradicate.

It also is difficult to control with most common agricultural herbicides. "This makes biological control an even more attractive alternative," says Cole.

The defoliating tortoise beetle has established itself well on bladder campion infestations in Redwater and Olds. As adults, the beetles eat the weed's leaves and as larvae, they destroy the seed capsules.

"This type of control is at an experimental level, but we have had some success in demonstration sites around the province," Cole says. The black dot beetle, for example, has increased in number to over 400 beetles per square metre at several locations and caused a reduction in the leafy spurge density by over 75 per cent.

Farmers interested in this type of weed control can contact: their local Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist; municipal agriculture fieldman; Dr. Alec McClay at the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville at 632-8207; Chuck Richardson with the public lands division of Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife in Sherwood Park at 464-7955; or, Cole in Edmonton at 427-7098.

"Anyone who wants to try the beetles should be aware they need a site that won't be sprayed, mowed, burned, cultivated or otherwise disturbed," he says.

Contact: Dan Cole
427-7098

Seeking to bridge two "worlds"

If it was a television series, a southern Alberta conservation and agriculture awareness committee might describe its mission as going where no committee has gone before.

The mission isn't travelling to outer space, but does want exploration of new "worlds". So, the committee—an ad hoc offshoot from the County of Forty Mile's Agricultural Service Board—will be visible in the County of Forty Mile, the Municipal District of Cypress and the cities of Lethbridge and Medicine Hat starting this summer. And unlike the prime directive that limits the Enterprize crew, this committee wants to make changes in the attitudes of the people it encounters.

"We want to bridge the gap of rural and urban perceptions related to conservation and agricultural issues in general," says Brenda Lea MacPhail, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Medicine Hat and the committee's chair. "We all need to have a common understanding of agriculture and its importance to the Alberta economy. There are a lot of misconceptions that need to be cleared up and some valuable knowledge to be learned about agriculture and soil conservation."

Travelling displays will be one of the ways the committee hopes to spread understanding. The displays—"The dirty '90s" and "Farming is food"—will make their first appearance at the Medicine Hat Exhibition and Stampede from July 22 through 26. The Bow Island Pivot Country Fair is next on the agenda, followed by the Manyberries fair and the Antelope Country Fair in August.

Essay, poster, poem, photography and project competitions at the fairs will also engage school children in awareness activities. As well, school tours to farms will also be arranged starting in the fall of 1992.

This fall the committee also hopes to have completed a speaker pool. The extensive list will include local to provincial speakers who can discuss aspects of conservation and agriculture. "Organizations will be able to contact us, get the name of speakers, how to contact the speaker and any costs associated with bringing the speaker to their community," says MacPhail.

But aside from these typical sort of activities, the committee has chosen some more unique ways to reach their goals. Their plan includes an annual "farmer for the day" promotion where an urban person is transported to an area farm to experience what a

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day in agriculture can involve.

For the first year, the Medicine Hat Chamber of Commerce will run the contest. The "awareness" farmer will spend a day at the farm of Bill and Sylvia Klassen of Bow Island during harvest in September.

The committee also plans to distribute literature on a number of agricultural issues to professional offices across southern Alberta. "For example, clients at a dentist or doctor's office would be able to read about cows, methane and the green house effect while waiting for their appointments." She adds literature mailouts are planned for about every six weeks.

Currently the conservation and agricultural awareness committee is energized with a diverse membership of nine. "We represent the rural and urban population with members from Alberta Agriculture, 4-H, the media and the County of Forty Mile Agricultural Service Board," says MacPhail. She adds one unique aspect of the committee is the number of women involved, including two Alberta Agriculture district home economists, a conservation farmer who is also a 4-H volunteer leader and a member of a family agribusiness.

For more information, contact MacPhail in Medicine Hat at 529-3616; Vern Arnold, agricultural fieldman in Foremost at 867-3606; or, Brenda Stryker, farmer and 4-H project advisor in Foremost, at 867-2103.

Contact: *Brenda Lea MacPhail*
529-3616

Jeopardy game teaches farm safety to teens

Moving parts and protective clothing aren't likely categories for big money during the television game show Jeopardy, but those kinds of question and answer combinations are hoped to help teenagers who will be working on Alberta farms this summer.

The popular television game show format will be part of farm safety seminars for participants in the 1992 Summer Farm Employment Program. They will have to come up with the questions to answers such as: "These are nonverbal directions for moving farm machinery" and "Many people have been wrapped around one because of loose clothing". [The respective questions are: "What are hand signals?" and "What is a power take off (PTO)?".]

Jacqueline Galloway, a farm safety consultant with Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program, says the new look seminar has been geared specifically to teenagers. "We felt getting a teen perspective was very important and that the seminar should be fun and interesting, with the education slipped in when they're not looking."

The seminar is particularly important, she adds, as many of the program participants don't have a farm background. "Often the young person is excited to be working on the farm and with machinery, but forgets about the dangers if they aren't careful."

Another of the components of the seminar is a safety video designed for teens by a Manitoba agricultural society. Pat Falloon, a 1992 National Hockey League rookie, introduces the "It only takes a second" video. "The video features teens talking to teens. It's high impact and very effective," says Galloway.

Farm safety courses had been optional in past for the summer farm work program, one component of the Alberta government's long time Summer Temporary Employment Program (STEP). While the courses still aren't compulsory, there will be a financial incentive to take the new format course in 1992.

The program pays up to 50 per cent of the employee's monthly wage to a maximum of $330 for each month of the program. If the student doesn't take the seminar, the funding assistance drops to 35 per cent of the employee's monthly wage.

The seminars will start on July 2 and run through July 13 at various regional locations across the province. Solomon Kyeremanteng and Eric Jones, both of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program, will lead the seminars.

The program limit for the Summer Farm Employment Program is 500 people. For the last 21 years the STEP program has provided summer employment for over 33,500 students while helping farmers meet seasonal labour requirements.

Contact: *Jacqueline Galloway*
427-2186

Coming this fall: "Don't shoot the teacher"

Teachers and the agriculture industry will meet under the theme of "don't shoot the teacher" as the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference makes its first appearance in Alberta this fall.

The fourth biennial conference is taking shape with several key sponsors committing money and other resources says Betty Gabert, a member of the conference planning committee and Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program co-ordinator. The conference will be held in Edmonton October 24 through 27.

Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and the Royal Bank of Canada have each pledged to be major sponsors of the conference and are actively involved in programming and planning Gabert says. Many other representatives from the agribusiness community will be involved as sponsors, resource people and with displays she adds.

Issue panels, case studies, workshops and round table sessions on a variety of agriculture and conservation topics will be featured at the conference. "The conference is intended to facilitate sharing of ideas and material between the ag industry and educators," says Gabert. "The main goal is to enable teachers to better integrate agriculture into their classroom curricula."

Teachers who have done a superior job of integrating agricultural

Cont'd on page 5

themes will be recognized at the conference. The teacher recognition awards will be presented to one teacher from each province. Winning teachers will be hosted at the conference by industry sponsors.

"One of the primary needs of the agriculture industry is to raise the awareness Canadians have of the system that supplies their food. Teachers have a fundamental role in developing that awareness, so recognition through the awards program is important," she says.

For more information, contact Arnold Hanson, conference chair in Camrose at 336-2598.

Contact: *Betty Gabert* *John Melicher*
427-2402 *451-5959*

Agri-News briefs

Alberta 4-Hers off to Montana

Four Alberta 4-Hers and their chaperons are off to Montana on July 3 to participate in that state's annual 4-H Congress. Janette Caldwell of Altario, Leanna Eaton of Ardrossan, Syd Gerig of Busby and Clint Neal of Lacombe will be guests at the three day 1992 Montana State 4-H Congress that starts July 7 in Bozeman. Doug Norman, Stettler regional 4-H specialist, and Karen Simpson, a Bentley 4-H leader and 4-H alumni member, will accompany the delegates. The Montana State Congress is designed for 4-H members to meet and participate in a number of activities including public speaking, judging, dress reviews and demonstrations. "Delegates should come away from their trip with a deeper appreciation and understanding of the similarities and differences between cultures, climates and lifestyles in Alberta and Montana," says Marguerite Stark, provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist. On their way to and from the congress the Alberta group will take in a number of well-known Montana agricultural and historical sites and points of interest. Participants were chosen to attend the congress at the recent provincial 4-H selections program. Trip awards are based on 4-H and community involvement as well as interpersonal skills. For more information, contact Stark or Janice Taylor in Airdrie at 948-8510 or 948-8514, or Norman in Stettler at 742-7542.

Alberta Ram Test Station sale July 4

The 18th annual Alberta Ram Test Station Sale goes Saturday July 4 in Olds. The sale at the Olds Livestock Pavilion features performance tested ram lambs indexing above 100 (above average for their breed). Dorset, Suffolk, Rambouillet, Columbia, Polypay, Rideau Arcott and Romney breeds will be offered for sale. Ram viewing begins at 10:30 a.m. and the sale at 1 p.m. A limited number of yearling wool breeds rams also available. Anyone who can't attend the sale, can contact Kim Stanford in Airdire at 948-8517 for information on written bids. The wild rose registered sheep sale follows. For more information on the wild rose sale, contact Gail at 295-2185.

Blackfalds farmers win pork production competition

Vanderschee Farms of Blackfalds responded best to the challenge of producing the best pork side in a limited time for the annual Alberta Pork Congress competition. Pork sides were judged on their index, loin eye, visual quality and the barrow's average daily gain. As well, their top hog brought Abram and Lennard Vanderschee $1,500 at the auction conclusion of the competition. The top 10 pork sides sold for an average price of $1,155. Buyers in turn donated the pork to Red Deer and area charities. Rounding out the top 10 (in order) were: Morinville Colony, Morinville; Bill Moes, Landside Farms, Jarvie; Dean Kent, Porky Acres, Marwayne; Jac Braat, Coaldale; Clifford Derewianka, Blue Diamond Enterprises, Waskatenau; Paul Ulrich, Spalding, Saskatchewan; Bill Slingerland, Picture Butte; Glenn Allen, Minioak Farms, Penhold; and Harvey Kieftenbeld, K Farms, Riviere Qui Barre. For more information, contact Art Lange in Edmonton at 427-5319.

Pool hosts ag ambassador fair winners

Five Alberta students who produced excellent agricultural work earned a trip to Calgary with their families for their achievement. Kevin Papp of Strathmore (division one winner), Amber Stach of Redcliff (division two winner), Jason Peterson of Tilley (division three winner), and Terri Sponitz and Jennifer Christensen of Edgerton (division four winners) spent a weekend in Calgary sponsored by the Alberta Wheat Pool. Their trip included tours of the Alberta Pool's Grain Academy and Canada Olympic Park. The students won their trip at the 1991 Ag Ambassador Fair. The fair showcases student agricultural projects and supports the Agriculture in the Classroom project. For more information, contact Betty Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2402.

First of its kind elevator coming to Morrin

Alberta Pool has finalized construction plans for a high throughput, over-the-track grain elevator just outside Morrin. The elevator will be the first of its kind in Western Canada. Construction on the steel structure will start immediately and the elevator should be ready for operation by January 1993. The over-the-track, all gravity design facilitates high speed throughput, eliminates handling and requires less power to operate. Total capacity will be about 5,000 tonnes with construction costs expected at about $1.92 million. "The construction of this facility will allow Alberta Pool to bring the latest in engineering technology to our country system and significantly enhance the services we offer to our customers," says Ray Schmitt, the pool's president. "The design is unique to the Prairie landscape and is sure to be a source of great pride for our members." For more information contact Schmitt at 290-4736, or Trish Jordan at 290-4647.

Dairy award of distinction recipients named

Bill Scott of Red Deer, Francis Wright of Didsbury, and Mildred and Cecil Lawrance of Grande Prairie have been named the 1992 provincial Dairy Award of Distinction recipients. The dairy farmers will be honored at the Westerner Dairy Showcase in early November. Scott and Wright are being honored posthumously. Plaques will be presented at an awards banquet on November 4. The award is sponsored by the United Farmers of Alberta and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. For more information, contact the Westerner Exposition Association in Red Deer at 343-7800.

Sheep to graze in Fort Saskatchewan

Sheep will be grazing on portions of the downtown rail/jail lands and the ski hill in Fort Saskatchewan this summer. The city council based its decision for live lawn mowers on a report by its parks and open spaces foreman and Ovine Enviro Systems Inc. of Brooks. The 200 plus sheep will come from a farm near Redwater. The flock will be herded by a professional shepherd with dogs and not fences. A phone-in public opinion poll conducted by the city brought about 200 calls with most people in favor of the environmentally friendly grass-cutting and weed control sheep would provide. Two enthusiastic supporters of the project are Pryce Alderson, the city's mayor, and Norma Armstrong, an alderman. The project is approved for 1992 only, on a pilot study basis. For more information, contact the City of Fort Saskatchewan at 992-6200.

Wind research site day July 15

The Alberta Renewable Energy Test Site in Pincher Creek will hold its first site day on July 15. The sitne day will coincide with activities planned for the opening of the Oldman River Dam. The purpose of the test site is to test and demonstrate remote pumping systems using wind and solar power. The program will include a walking tour of the systems on test. The site includes four shallow well sumps, two deep wells and four solar test beds. Interest in remote pumping using renewable energy has grown in the last few years. Pumping systems allow for better pasture management and enhanced water quality from keeping livestock out of surface water supplies. For more information on the site day, contact the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

LARA research farm day

The Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA) will hold a research farm day on July 30. The event will be held at the LARA research farm located six miles east of Bonnyville on Highway 28. For more information, contact: Dave Burdek, LARA manager in Lac La Biche, at 623-5218; Guy Bonneau, LARA research agronomist in Bonnyville, at 826-7260; or, Jay Byer, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Bonnyville, at 826-3388.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

July 6, 1992

Dirty dugouts require more than chemicals

Farmers should tackle the actual problem, and not just the symptoms, of poor quality dugout water says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

During this time of the year when water quality in many surface water sources begins to deteriorate, many farmers get concerned about the effects of poor quality on human health, animal health and production says Bob Buchanan, regional engineering technologist based in Barrhead.

"While expensive water treatment systems can correct the symptoms of poor quality dugout water, it's also important to look at the problem and year round prevention techniques," Buchanan adds.

Taste, odor and color problems in dugout water appear obvious when floating algae and weeds can be seen in a dugout. However, these are only signs of a problem and not the problem itself. Continual build-up of nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorous) and silt in farm dugouts from spring and summer run off causes tremendous growth of algae and weeds. Heavy summer rains are especially destructive.

"Occasionally run off water from these storms looks like mud soup, and one run off like this can destroy a farm dugout. The nutrients in the run off cause algae and weeds to grow. The plant material decomposes and the water quality deteriorates further. You might say the water changes from mud soup to pea soup," he says.

As tempting as it may be to use a chemical controls, preventative measures to improve dugout water quality should come first. These preventative techniques include sedimentation controls, pumping systems and aeration.

To start, proper dugout construction helps to minimize algae, and especially weed problems. Deeper dugouts with steeper end slopes will reduce both weed and algae growth.

A system of run off controls such as dikes, ditches, gated culverts and grassed waterways all help to allow only the best water into the dugout notes Buchanan. "Wherever possible allow only the initial snowmelt into the dugout as it is the best water quality," he adds.

For livestock watering dugouts, pumping systems are recommended to protect the dugout, water quality and livestock. "Livestock watering directly from farm dugouts will trample in silt and manure which leads to a rapid increase in algae growth. Heavy growths of blue green algae are of most concern because of the toxic level of poisons they can release into water," he says.

Most farmers don't realize livestock drink less when quality is poor, he adds, and as a result eat less, dropping production. Poor access to water caused by muddy conditions around a dugout can also result in livestock drinking less water.

Year round dugout aeration using a small electric air compressor or a windmill type aerator also helps to improve dugout water quality. "Aeration helps keep the water quality fresh and reduces the amount of nutrients from the sediments at the dugout's bottom," he says.

Alberta Agriculture district and regional offices have more information on dugouts including a number of publications and a video.

Contact: *Bob Buchanan*
674-8252

This Week

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AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Controlling the algae monster in farm dugouts

Successfully dealing with dugout algae means never letting the monster get out of control says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Using preventative techniques and chemical control in the early stages of algae growth are most effective," says Bob Buchanan, regional engineering technologist in Barrhead. "But once left unchecked, algae will grow so rapidly that it's extremely difficult to restore good water quality. In the extreme, you might have to use a backhoe or dragline to clean the dugout or dig a new one."

Terrible taste, to plugged water treatment filters, to unsightly water for recreational use are among the problems algae cause. Blue-green algae are of most concern because they can be toxic to humans, domestic animals and wildlife.

Proper dugout construction and other preventative techniques can prevent problems. For example, year round dugout aeration is recommended. The aeration maintains high dissolved oxygen levels in water. Most types of algae prefer low dissolved oxygen levels, and the higher dissolved oxygen prevents nutrient recyclying from the bottom sediments.

Eventually, though some chemical control may be necessary says Buchanan. "However, before you begin a chemical treatment, you must determine the types of algae in your dugout. Not only will this ensure the best results, it's also important so you don't kill some of the natural biological controls that exist in the dugout."

Algae types can be broken down into four categories: blue-green, small green, filamentous and branching. In most cases, a visual check is all that is required to determine these types of algae common to Alberta. Low or large concentrations of blue-green algae change the recommended chemical treatment notes Buchanan. Low concentrations float close the water surface, are in visible clumps or have a grass-like appearance. Copper sulphate (bluestone) is recommended.

He adds bluestone can trigger a rapid release of the algae toxins, so large concentrations should be treated with hydrated lime. These large concentrations look like blue-green slime floating on the water surface or along the dugout banks. It grows rapidly during warm, sunny days and dies during extended cool, cloudy periods.

Small green algae are microscopic and generally appear as a brown to green discoloration in water. Hydrated lime, or aluminum sulphate in the case of highly colored water, are recommended. "These algae are copper resistant," says Buchanan, "and repeated copper sulphate treatments will often cause a rapid increase in their growth."

Commonly called pond moss or pond scum as it floats on the water surface, filamentous algae has a coarse fibrous texture with a green to yellow color. It starts to grow in shallow areas near the bottom of a dugout and is floated to the surface by oxygen bubbles. The oxygen bubbles are visible in the floating mat. Reglone A with diquat or a granular form of cutrine are recommended for complete dugout or spot treatment. Buchanan says hydrated lime is also effective.

Reglone A is also an effective treatment for branching algae. This algae has a branch-like appearance similar to most plants and grows from the dugout's bottom. It also gives a musty to skunky odor to the water.

"Other products are currently being sold to improve dugout water quality, but some aren't registered for use on farm dugouts and others don't provide algae control," he says.

Buchanan adds some farmers ask Alberta Agriculture staff whether fish can help to control algae growth. "From our experience, the addition of fish to a dugout often complicates algae control," he says.

In most cases farmers are using the same dugout for either a household or livestock water supply. Some would like to improve dugout water quality by chemical control, but don't want to kill the fish. "This becomes a real dilemma and often the farmer will opt to put up with poor water quality caused by the algae growth," he says.

In some cases dugouts contain so much nutrient rich sediment that preventative and chemical controls of algae are no longer effective. "Then the only solution is to the clean the dugout with a large backhoe or dragline, or dig a new dugout," Buchanan says.

Alberta Agriculture district and regional offices have more information on the identification and control of algae. This includes publications and a video titled, "Farm dugouts".

Contact: *Bob Buchanan*
674-8252

Of armyworms, corn borers and chinch bugs in July

Monitoring insects pests may not sound like the best way to spend the summer to some people, but keeping tabs on field crop pests is an important job for Alberta Agriculture specialists and technicians.

Jim Jones, an entomologist based at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks, has started issuing a weekly report on one of those insects, the European corn borer.

As part of a Farming for the Future on-farm demonstration project Jones is involved with, he is monitoring the borers in corn fields whose crops will be processed. "Processed corn growers will receive the weekly report with notes on pest management appropriate to the numbers and the growth stage of the insect," he says.

The adult corn borer is a moth and females lay 500 or more eggs during July on the underside of corn leaves. Larvae feed initially at the leaf axil, but then tunnel into the stock. Older larvae will also chew into the crops.

Bertha armyworm moths are also active in July. They usually

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begin flying between mid-June and early July says Jones. He notes a large bertha armyworm outbreak isn't expected in 1992, but the monitoring process is continuing.

"This year is the tail end of a five-year outbreak. There has been a trend to fewer armyworms and less damage over the past couple of years. Increasing numbers of parasites have fed on their larvae contributing to the dwindling numbers. And while it's doubtful there will be a significant problem this year, we're going to continue to monitor moth numbers throughout the decline of the outbreak cycle," Jones says.

An insect pest that hadn't been around in Alberta for a couple of decades may reappear this month as well. Last year a chinch bug infestation was identified in southern Alberta for the first time since the early 1970s.

The infestation was found in a field near Del Bonita. Agriculture Canada reports the bugs feed only on plants in the grass family, including cultivated and wild grasses, corn and small grains. Barley and grass, especially crested wheatgrass, are the most likely hosts.

Adult chinch bugs appear approximately in mid-June. The adult is only about two mm long and is black and white to grey and white. The young, or nymphs, are reddish with a band of white on their backs, just behind the wing pads. They become darker as they grow older. Adults are poor fliers, and if an adequate food source exists, they will usually remain in the same field.

Chinch bugs are usually found in the soil at the base of plants. They damage plants by sucking sap from their stems. Wilting leaves and black stems are usually the first signs of damage.

"Because the chinch bug has reappeared in southern Alberta, there's a need to monitor any spread," says Jones. Farmers are asked to report any suspected damage from chinch bugs to their Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist or municipal fieldman.

Contact: Jim Jones
362-1339

Farm Building Plan Service list updated

Alberta Agriculture has recently updated the list of farm building plans available to the province's farmers.

The list is contained in a fact sheet, "Farm Building Plan Service" (Agdex 713-1). "There are 225 plans and technical bulletins listed in the new index," notes Dennis Darby, Alberta Agriculture farm structures engineer based in Lethbridge, and manager of the Plan Service.

Several new plans have been added since the last index in 1989. "The most important of these," he says, "are technical leaflets on natural ventilation and greenhouse ventilation; new structural details on plate beams and rafters; updated information on hopper bin foundations and bunker silos; plus, a new kennel-type hog barn plan."

Plans are in three categories—full-scale building blueprints, smaller plans of building components such as air inlets or feeders of many types and technical bulletins. "These technical leaflets, such as the ventilation series, are a major addition to the service in recent years," says Darby.

Plans and leaflets cover the whole range of livestock storage and production buildings and equipment. They are grouped in nine categories: beef, dairy, swine, sheep, poultry, fruit-vegetable-greenhouse crops, grain and forage, special structures and building engineering. The last two include plans of the main building types, building components, and heating and ventilating.

A leaflet order form is attached to the end of the factsheet. Regional engineers are also listed for further information.

All Alberta Agriculture district offices have a complete set of the plan leaflets. Large scale plans are available in limited quantities. "These plans can be ordered by mail, but we prefer you contact the regional engineer in your area. Not only will they give you the plans, but also they can offer planning and design assistance as well as explain construction details or modifications to a particular plan," notes Darby.

Most of the plans are produced by the Canada Plan Service, a co-operative project of the federal and provincial agricultural departments. Additional plans were also developed by Alberta Agriculture for specific Alberta requirements.

The factsheet is available by writing the Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Or for more information, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Dennis Darby
381-5114

Consumers need beef education

People need more education about beef's specific qualities, particularly that it's not really as high in fat as consumers thought, a popular cookbook author told a recent "celebrate beef" luncheon.

Anne Lindsay, considered one of Canada's leading food experts in her field, gave that message to an audience of 100 during a special luncheon that was part of the first Alberta Beef Congress. Lindsay's three cookbooks—**Smart Cooking, The Lighthearted Cookbook,** and **Everyday Lighthearted Cooking**—have sold over 800,000 copies.

Lindsay says she doesn't think consumers are going to eat less beef, but they still need to know more about beef's lean properties as well as the nutrients it provides such as iron, zinc and vitamin B_{12}

"I get a lot of people saying to me that they've changed their diets, and they're eating healthier and then they very proudly tell me that they've cut meat out of their diets. And I say, 'why?'

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"I eat meat quite a bit. It is part of a healthy diet. We need it. It is a good source of protein. More important for a lot of women is that it's a excellent source of iron, and it's difficult for many women to get the amount of iron that they need," she says. One in five Canadian women is estimated to have no iron reserves, one in 10 is anaemic and only three in five are meeting their bodies' iron requirements. "The iron in beef is in a very useable form," she adds.

Beef is also a good source of zinc and vitamin B_{12}. Both are nutrients our bodies need, and often Canadians aren't eating enough of them she says.

She says most consumers realize today's beef is lean. Some consumers, however, have avoided red meats because of confusing messages about cholesterol and fats she notes. And while choosing leaner cuts of meat is one way of cutting down on fats, she doesn't recommend taking meats totally out of the diet.

"I know that meat has been given a rough deal in the last 10 years," Lindsay says, "and many people think that a healthier diet means not eating red meats, which is absolutely not true. But it does mean using lean cuts of meat and cutting out the fat."

Cutting out the fat includes smaller portions, trimming excess and in particular, not frying or using fats to cook the meat. People are learning to cook without adding fats she adds. Grilling is one popular method.

"I think the easier that beef is to cook and for people to use, the more often it's going to be used," she says of future trends. Ready-made kabobs and pre-cut stir fry meats are two current examples. She says she'd also like to see ready-to-grill marinated flank steak, fast cooking cuts of beef packages in small amounts and nutritionally-high beef fast and snack food.

Out-of-province destinations for Alberta 4-Hers

This week 25 Alberta 4-Hers will travel east and north as part of two different exchanges and tours.

Five 4-H members will travel to different provinces as part of the national Royal Bank Interprovincial Exchange, while 22 others will bus north through Alberta and into the Northwest Territories on an agricultural development tour.

Alberta's representatives and their destinations in the interprovincial exchange are: Laurie Willes of Vermilion to Manitoba; Colette Eleniak of Lamont to Ontario; Tricia Haryett of Ardrossan to Nova Scotia; Deanna Knowles of Byemoor to Prince Edward Island; and, Karen Bussey of Airdrie to New Brunswick. This Canada wide exchange is sponsored by the Royal Bank with 50 4-Hers spending two weeks in another part of the country.

These five delegates will meet in Calgary for a send-off banquet and then leave the next day, July 7. They will return to Alberta on July 20.

"During their time away they will have the chance to experience and become familiar with the lifestyles and customs of another province by exchanging ideas and developing a better understanding and appreciation of other Canadians," says Marguerite Stark, provincial camping and 4-H exchange specialist.

As part of the same exchange, five 4-Hers from across Canada will arrive in Alberta on July 7. After touring Drumheller, Calgary and Banff, the out-of-province 4-Hers will spend the rest of their time with Alberta 4-H families. The Alberta hosts are: Laura Lee Adam and family of Trochu; Brett Lucas and family of Claresholm; Wendy Hall and family of Airdrie; Janice Johnson and family of Didsbury; and Pat and Barb Willis and family of Mayerthorpe.

On July 8, 20 Alberta 4-Hers will leave Edmonton with Yellowknife as their most northerly destination before they return to Edmonton. This tour is designed to increase awareness of agricultural diversity in northern Alberta and the NWT says Stark.

"Camping enroute, the 4-Hers purchase Alberta products wherever possible, visit agricultural processing and production facilities and identify Alberta products available in the Northwest Territories," she adds.

Kelly Ainsworth, Clive; Kevin Babiuk, Brosseau; John Beasley, Patricia; Grant Bingeman, Oyen; Shannon Cornish, Cardston; Clinton Davies, Cochrane; Greg Evans, Balzac; Keith Evans, Carstairs; Leanne Kastelic, Sangudo; Raymond Mappin, Byemoor; Dixon Hammond, Pincher Creek; Kevin Meakin, Morinville; Vern Pederson, Barrhead; Joe Pimm, Grimshaw; Gwen Skocdople, Botha; Kezia Sliwkanich, Sherwood Park; Greg Soetaert, St. Albert; Connie Swanson, Milk River; Ronda Taylor, Red Deer; and, Allan Zimmer, Daysland are the tour participants. They will be joined by Yvonne Love, former northeast regional 4-H specialist, and chaperons Keith Lysons of Vermilion and Judy Hrudey of Andrew.

Alberta Treasury Branches and Edmonton Northlands are the tour sponsors for the fourth year.

Exchange and tour participants were chosen at the annual provincial 4-H selections program earlier this year. Trip awards are based on community and 4-H involvement as well as interpersonal skills.

Contact:	Marguerite Stark	Janice Taylor
	948-8510	948-8514

Alberta Agriculture appointments

New district agriculturist in Warner

Tracy Dow is the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist for the County of Warner. He joined the department more than a decade ago and has spent the last seven years as the southern regional dairy specialist. Previously he spent 11 years working for Shur Gain. "I've lived here all my life and my first love is southern Alberta with all the intricacies that make it tick. I have no real desire to live elsewhere at present and I've even learned to tolerate the wind," he says. Of his new job, he adds, "With a lot of assistance and patience in helping me adapt to this career change, I can continue to provide the high degree of professional service with honesty and integrity that the people in the County of Warner have grown accustomed to." Dow is a 1970 graduate of the University of Alberta with a BSc in agriculture with a major in animal science. He grew up on a family dairy farm in the Lethbridge area. While the dairy enterprise was sold in 1972, he continues to manage the irrigated farm as a commercial cow/calf operation with forage production as a cash crop. Dow can be reached in Warner at 642-3884.

Lamont has new district agriculturist

Janet Kerr is the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lamont. Kerr has spent the past six years as a regional 4-H specialist with the department, first based in Fairview from 1986 through 1990, and then in the Red Deer region. "I am looking forward to the opportunity to work in the Lamont area, and meet with people involved in the agricultural industry," she says. Kerr is a 1982 graduate of the University of Alberta's BSc in agriculture program. She majored in animal science and agricultural economics. Originally from the Camrose area, Kerr grew up on a dairy farm. Kerr can be reached in Lamont at 895-2219.

Agri-News briefs

4-H club week runs July 6-12 in Olds

Personal development is in the spotlight as 120 Alberta 4-H delegates meet in Olds for the 50th anniversary edition of Club Week. 1992 also marks the 75th anniversary of 4-H in Alberta during Canada's 125 birthday year. Under the umbrella of this year's "clue in " theme, delegates will explore issues such as motivation, family, peers, being Canadian, self-esteem and peer support. Through the week delegates are encouraged to discover their strengths and potential, while growing and developing as people. "Club Week is a life changing experience," says Arron Madson, 4-H personal development specialist. "The small group setting establishes strong relationships among the delegates—some are life-long ties." In one of the week's session highlights, "celebration of differences", guest speakers with a physical disability or illness will speak about themselves and their experiences as a person with a disability. Another highlight of Club Week'92 will be the rededication of a 4-H cairn in conjunction with the induction of William Elliot, the founder of 4-H in Alberta, into the 4-H Hall of Fame on July 7. Each 4-H club in the province was asked to send a representative to this popular 4-H event, open to senior members age 15 to 21. A total of 180 names were submitted. Alberta Wheat Pool, the United Grain Growers, Agriculture Canada and Alberta Agriculture are sponsors of Club Week. For more information, contact Madson in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Lean lamb field day August 6

Production of lean lamb is the focus of a day long seminar at Olds College on August 6. The Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association is co-sponsor of the information packed day. The lean lamb field day starts with live juding of carcass lambs at 9 a.m. The morning also includes producer forums on selling and promoting lamb and expert panels on genetics. Carcass evaluations will follow in the afternoon. A pre-registration fee of $5 covers a barbeque lunch. For more information, contact the Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association in Calgary at 295-2185.

August 7 annual PID/U of A agronomy tour

The annual joint Alberta Agriculture plant industry division and Univeristy of Alberta agronomy tour will go August 7. The day long tour in the Edmonton area begins at 8 a.m. from the University of Alberta parkland farm. The tour provides an opportunity to view the latest on weed resistance, cooper deficiency, molecular biology approaches to barley breeding, early maturing wheat, soil acidification techniques and other ongoing research projects. For more information, contact Walter Yarish at 427-7098, Doug Penney at 427-2530 or Keith Briggs at 492-3239.

ACC accepting nominations

Nominations are now open for Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) zone delegates. This year, 46 positions are open in the cattle producers' parliament. The nomation deadline is August 21. Eligible producers can contact their local delegates, or the ACC office in Calgary for nomination forms and information. Election meetings will be held from November 2 through 13 throughout the province. Every cattle producer has a vote and all delegates and directors are elected. A cattle producer is an individual who has marketed cattle in Alberta during the past 18 months. To ensure equal representation from all parts of Alberta, the province is divided into nine zones. Ten delegates are elected from each zone. Each zone delegate is elected for a two year term. From that delegate body, a board of directors is elected. For more information, contact: Margaret Jenson, ACC producer liaison committee chair in Tees at 788-2474; or, Gordon Mitchell or Joanne Lemke in Calgary at 275-4400.

Steps to forage profit opportunities identified

Profits in a cattle operation often depend on forage costs which can be as much as 45 to 70 per cent of maintaining a cow herd. Larry Corah, an extension beef specialist with Kansas State University, outlined what he saw as seven key steps in a profitable forage program at the recent Alberta Beef Congress. Effective use of the forage resource is the first key. This includes an inventory of resources and a strong grazing system. His second recommendation is to purchase supplements to compliment your forage resource by understanding the nutritional value ofyour forage, and then buying any needed protein and mineral supplements. Understanding the nutrutional value of forage and how it may change through the season is also important. He advocates forage testing. Step four is to avoid wastage. One of the hidden costs in a forage based production system is waste he says. Well documented data in the United States has shown from 20 to 30 per cent of harvested forage is wasted during feeding. Corah also recommended emphasizing nutrient quality in forage harvesting, that means understanding how quality can change in the field by stage of the crop and harvesting to take advantage of maximum nutrients. Avoiding fads and gimmicks, and sticking to research proven concepts, was another piece of advice. Finally, he reminded producers forage isn't a cheap feed source to supply. He suggests documenting feed costs, especially in drought years, when it might not be an advantage to buy forage.

Four day festival of life opens Oldman Dam

A four day festival of life celebrating water in southern Alberta will kick off with the official opening of the Oldman Dam on the morning of July 16. More than 300 volunteers from area towns, municipalities, chambers of commerce and irrigation districts are involved in the festival that runs from July 16 through 19. Daily events will include a showcase of southern Alberta talent, irrigation and water management displays, interpretative float and boat trips, a farmers' market and a number of recreational opportunities on the dam resevoir. Als0 part of the special activities are: the Canadian Whitewaters Nationals canoe and kayak competition July 17; the Oldman River Antique Equipment and Threshing Club's fifth annual show July 18 and 19 at its new "Heritage Acres" site; a country music concert featuring Prairie Oyster on the evening of July 18; and, catamaran and windsurfacing competitions July 18 and 19. A list of accomodations including hotels/motels, guest houses and camping has been developed. For more information on the festival, event times and accomodations, call 627-5922 in Pincher Creek.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

July 13, 1992

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Southern regions blessed with June rains

June and early July precipitation made many farmers in southern Alberta happy, while farmers in the central part of the province are waiting for rain says an Alberta Agriculture weather resource specialist.

"After a dry spring in southern Alberta, above normal June rains improved surface soil moisture conditions and provided good growing conditions. In just a few days during June some parts of the south received a third to a half of their normal growing season precipitation totals," says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

"However, central regions require above normal rainfall during the rest of the growing season to assure good crop yields," he adds.

During the month of June precipitation in agricultural areas of the province varied from 23 mm at Vegreville, only 31 per cent of its normal, to 180.1 mm at Pincher Creek, 214 per cent of its normal.

Most of north central Alberta, some parts of eastern Alberta and the Peace region reported between 20 and 50 mm of precipitation. This is less than half of the normal amount for June Dzikowski notes. South central Alberta reported between 40 and 200 mm, ranging from slightly below normal to double the normal for June. Southern regions reported 80 to 200 mm for the month and into early July, about one and half times to double the normal for the period.

June's average temperatures around the province were about one half to two degrees above normal.

For more information, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Consider alternatives in pasture watering

Cattle mired in mud and toxic algae are two reasons Alberta cattle producers are looking at different ways to water their cattle herds when they're on pasture.

"Last summer, for example," says Ken Williamson, an Alberta Agriculture regional engineering technologist in Red Deer, "eight cow carcasses were discovered in muck around a slough in the northeast. To get to water, they'd waded out, got stuck and died because they couldn't get out."

Most pasture water systems allow cattle direct access to sloughs, dugouts and streams says Williamson. As a result, there has been physical damage from cattle tramping in banks. As well, manure in the water supply contributes to nutrient build up in the water leading to rapid algae growth. Many of the fast growing algae in warm stagnant water bodies are toxic.

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"Every year cattle are killed by toxic algae somewhere in Alberta. Then there are the more subtle problems of foot rot, leptospirosis, animal stress and the life expectancy of the water source," he says.

However, there are a number of remedies—from access ramps to windmills— that can solve the problems caused by cattle having direct access to a dugout or natural water supply he adds.

An access ramp, the minimum improvement that can be made, gives cattle watering sites with a solid base and good footing. "If given the choice, cattle will use this for their watering site," Williamson says. "Additional fencing may or may not be required to force cattle to use the site."

An access ramp must have a relatively low slope, about five or six feet for every one foot of drop. The simplest approach is to use a 1.5 to three foot thick layer of pit run gravel about 10 feet wide that has been pressed into the mud beside the water hole by a caterpillar.

A variety of pumping systems can also be an alternative. Utina or Lister pasture pumps, solar pumping systems, a gravity flow water reservoir and windmills are some of the methods livestock producers could use.

"Each have their advantage for a particular situation," says Williamson. "Pasture pumps are something cattle use to pump water for themselves. Windmills have been in use for centuries. Solar pumping is something new with some fairly large costs. The gravity flow reservoir will take extra construction when digging a dugout."

Pipelines are also a cost-effective alternative for watering livestock he adds. Options range from a minimum surface pipeline that would have to be drained and blown out in the fall, to a "Cadillac" system buried below the frost level. "Costs, of course, vary along with the system," he says.

While hauling water to livestock may seem to be a step back in time Williamson says there are situations when it's a viable alternative. "This is especially true in intensive grazing management when cattle are sometimes moved daily from pasture to pasture. Water can be a limiting factor and an easily moved stock tank can be an answer."

Contact: Ken Williamson
340-5324

Slaughter cattle price trends lower in summer

Supplies of beef are expected to be seasonally large this summer with prices likely bottoming out in August says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"While a strong pace of slaughter cattle marketings in May and June was a big plus to summer price prospects, the possibility of a hole in cattle numbers this month is wishful thinking," says Ron Gietz.

Alberta fed cattle prices are expected to be in the mid to upper $70/cwt. range in July. From that level, he says, the market is likely to trend sideways to lower, bottoming out in August. "Barring a sharply lower dollar beyond then into the fourth quarter, a rebound in prices is only likely to be modest," he says.

Gietz adds he projects Alberta Direct Sale (ADS) steer prices at an average of $76/cwt. in July, $73 in August, $74 in September, $77 in October, $79 in November and $78 in December.

So far in 1992, fewer Canadian cattle have been placed in the U.S., but Gietz says he expects a surge in that number during the third quarter. "The pace of placements this summer will set the tone for fourth quarter fed cattle markets."

Events in the U.S. will continue to have a downward influence on Canadian boneless and cow beef markets he adds. "This may also pressure slaughter cattle markets lower." The events are mostly a "voluntary" restraint of Australian beef exports to the U.S. following large shipments early in the year.

"Knowing that the U.S. would place a quota on Oceanic exports if the current pace of shipments were sustained, the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation has chosen to cut back boneless beef shipments to the U.S. market.

"As a result of the U.S. restrictions, Canada has received, and can expect to continue to receive, a sharply increased supply of Australian beef," he says. The increase in that product depresses wholesale manufacturing and cow beef prices he adds.

In the outlook for feeder cattle, the barley crop is an important concern during the summer months he adds. "So far expectations are for an average crop, which lends support to the feeder cattle market. Of course, much could happen to the barley crop between now and the end of the summer."

A more far reaching affect on the market could come from a U.S. investigation of the Canadian and U.S. cattle industries and terms of trade between the countries. The investigation will be conducted under section 332 of the 1930 Tariff Act and must be completed within seven months of the June 12, 1992 request. A similar investigation, completed in 1987, resulted in a lengthy report, but no U.S. trade action. This latest request specifically cites concerns about the national tripartite stabilization program in 1991.

"There is no way of predicting the outcome of this investigation, or whether or not countervailing duties on Canadian beef and cattle exports might be implemented," says Gietz. "However, given the volume of trade between the two countries, even a small duty could have a large impact on Canadian cattle prices."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Sheep industry has reasons to grow

A long term decline of Alberta's sheep population began to reverse in the mid-1970s, and that growth trend is expected to continue says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

That long term production trend is shown in 1991 Census of Agriculture data says Jo Ann Sandhu. "There are a number of reasons for the sheep industry to keep getting bigger," she adds, "and most relate to consumer concerns about environment and healthy eating. The challenge for Alberta's sheep and lamb producers will be to find ways of taking the best advantage of these emerging trends."

More and more marginal lands are expected to be converted from cropping to grazing she notes. "Not only is this for soil conservation, but from restructuring agricultural support programs to make them more production neutral to fit proposed GATT rules."

Sandhu also notes some lands appear to be more accessible to grazing by sheep, than by cattle. "As well, sheep grazing also has the potential to become an important part of forestry management systems," she says, moving sheep out of their more traditional pastures and so increasing their base. Lamb can also fit into consumer's new diet attitudes linked to concerns about what's in their food and how it's produced she adds.

A final basis for the industry's growth potential is related to wool. "Growing environmental consciousness may result in reduced use of synthetic fibres derived from non-renewable resources and increasing use of natural fibres such as wool," says Sandhu.

Contact: Jo Ann Sandhu
427-5386

Weather, export demand will affect wheat futures

Export demand in July will likely begin to set the future tone of wheat markets says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"With winter wheat harvesting progressing, U.S. weather conditions will likely become less of a direct factor in wheat markets in the next few months," says Jo Ann Sandhu. "Futures prices could move higher though, if extremely hot, dry conditions develop in the spring wheat growing areas of the western plains, or if similar conditions develop in the mid-West and wheat futures move in sympathy with corn futures."

Canadian Wheat Board asking prices for No. 1 CWS wheat did fall during June, while asking prices for durum remained practically unchanged. Sandhu notes increasing export demand will be necessary to maintain current price levels.

With no new GATT agreement in place, the international wheat market will continue to be dominated by export subsidies and credits offered by exporting countries she says. "Producers should carefully consider the risks of carrying over their wheat inventories into the new crop year with these types of government subsidies overshadowing supply and demand market fundamentals."

One supply expectation is that the former Soviet Union is anticipated to produce a larger wheat crop than last year she adds. "However, there is still a need for more imported wheat, and most of their imports will have to be financed on credit provided by exporters," she says. For example, Canada granted Russia a $1.5 billion revolving line of credit and a five-year 25 million tonne grain sale in February.

Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) grain sales have been good this current year, even if prices left something to be desired she notes. By June 14 with seven weeks left in the crop year, CWB wheat exports, not including durum, were up by more than 18 per cent from the previous year.

Contact: Jo Ann Sandhu
427-5386

Large U.S. corn crop negative for feedgrain prices

Both positive and negative events between now and harvest could affect feedgrain pricing in the 1992-93 crop year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

A good to excellent U.S. corn crop—59 per cent of the crop had that rating as of June 21—could keep barley prices similar to their 1991-92 levels says Al Dooley. U.S. corn production is estimated at almost 218 million tonnes, or 25 per cent of the world coarse grain output.

"A crop of that size would be a relatively large one and, combined with an expected large increase in carryover stocks, would be negative to prices in the new crop year," he says.

"However, the corn crop has entered its critical development stage and there could be a change, especially with concerns over dryness in major growing areas," he adds. "Those concerns will likely continue through August, and whether or not there is actual crop damage, new crop pricing opportunities should occur."

Dooley advises producers to price into rising markets and to "average up". He also suggests watching basis levels differences between companies as well as how a particular company's basis changes.

"Often the difference in basis levels between companies can be large, perhaps in the order of $8 to $10 per tonne. This can be as much as a small market rally," he says.

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The oat market may have some independent strength he notes with relatively tight supplies in North America. Smaller crops in the Scandinavian countries are expected he adds. "At the same time though, there is a limit to the degree prices can move independently as buyers substitute between feed ingredients."

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

Agriculture video use on rise

Alberta Agriculture's video library system has just finished its best year yet.

"Total loans for 1991-92 were to almost 10,000. That's up from 8,700 the year before," says Ken Blackley, information officer with the broadcast media branch. "And, if you add to that total all the tapes by district agriculturists and home economists in their own programming as well as by Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative programs, you could easily add 1,000 more loans to the total."

A recent survey, by the broadcast media branch, gave the tapes high ratings. District staff asked their borrowers to fill out a form on each video they borrowed. Over 87 per cent of respondents rated the subject quality as excellent or good, while 82 per cent thought the presentation style to be good or excellent.

The Alberta Agriculture district video library system began in 1986 with a pilot project involving 13 district offices. Each office was given 40 titles appropriate to its area. Since then, the system has expanded. Now all district offices have a minimum 75 tape library. Titles run a gamut from production topics through to marketing and human resource management.

"It seems the video series are the most popular," says Blackley. "Our horse training, grain marketing, cattle marketing and estate planning series are the most borrowed tapes in the system. Old favorites, such as the 'Lively Calf', as well as new releases such as 'The Green Cow', are also very well used."

Farmers can contact their district office for more information on its video library holdings.

As well as the district office libraries, there is a central library in Edmonton. This main library has 16mm films and slide kits as well as video tapes. Besides Alberta Agriculture produced titles, the central library also has a large number of videos purchased from outside organizations. A catalogue of its holdings is available.

Alberta residents may borrow central library materials free of charge by writing the Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Out-of-province borrowers are limited to Alberta Agriculture productions and they must pay all courier charges.

Contact: Ken Blackley
427-2127

Agri-News briefs

Environmental soil science conference August 8-15

The Canadian Society of Soil Science (CSSS) and the Canadian Land Reclamation Association (CLRA) will hold a joint environmental soil science conference August 8 through 15 in Edmonton. As well as pre and post conference tours, an International Society of Soil Science (ISSS) workshop will be hosted. The pre-conference tours run August 8 and 9. There is a two day tour of the forest soils of west central Alberta and a one day tour dedicated to reconciling agriculture and the environment in northeastern Alberta. The joint meeting sessions are August 10 and 11. The first day's focus is anthropogenic chemicals and soils, the second day's is soil quality. The one day post-conference tour looks at coal mine reclamation. The ISSS workshop runs from August 12 through 15. Also affiliated with the joint annual meeting will be the International Symposium of Agricultural Techniques in Cold Regions II. The symposium runs August 4 through 7 at the University of Alberta. For more information, contact the University of Alberta's department of soil science at 492-3242.

Royal ag society of Commonwealth meets in Calgary

Prince Philip will be in Calgary as president of the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC) for its 1992 international conference. The conference runs July 15 through 18 and is co-hosted by the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Association and the Canadian Western Agribition. The conference's theme is livestock production from a global perspective. Biotechnology, management, feeding, fish, the environment and the food business in the international market are general session topics. The RASC is a federation of

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national agricultural societies within the Commonwealth. It came into being in 1957. The membership of 33 includes three Canadian groups. For more information, contact Fieldstone Giles Marketing and Public Relations in Regina at (306) 347-7770.

Western Canadian Fertilizer Association meets

The Western Canadian Fertilizer Association will hold its annual meeting and convention next month. The event will be held August 4 through 6 at the Delta Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon. For more information, contact Mavis Merritt in Saskatoon at (306) 933-8715 or (306) 652-2699.

Unifarm summer council meeting

Unifarm will holds summer council meeting in Grande Prairie next week. The two days of meetings run July 20 and 21 at the Grande Prairie Inn. For more information, contact Shirley Dyck, secretary to the Unifarm board, in Edmonton at 451-5912.

Festival of Life cancelled

The four day festival planned along with the official opening of the Oldman Dam has been cancelled. Festival activities were to run July 16 through 19. Some events that were to occur at the same time will still be take place, including the Oldman River Antique Equipment and Threshing Club's fifth annual show July 18 and 19 at its new Heritage Acres site and the Canadian Whitewaters Nationals canoe and kayak competition on July 17.

Phone (403) 427 2121

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July 20, 1992

Beef management options for dried out pastures

Beef producers do have some management options when low rainfall limits their cattle pasture says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Many producers rely on grass to provide the nutrition for milk production, calf growth and rebreeding," says Dale Engstrom, "and, grass is normally the most economic source of those nutrients in the summer. But with low rainfall in some areas, some producers are running short of grass, and are having to make decisions about their herds."

While selling part of the herd is one option when grass is in short supply, it isn't the only option Engstrom adds. Creep feeding calves is one alternative he suggests.

If grass is available, but has a low protein content, use a high protein creep feed. If both quality and quantity of the grass is poor, then the creep should provide a balance of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals. "Creep feeding usually pays off as long as calves don't get too fat for market," he says, "but, it does little for the cows."

Another option is weaning calves earlier. A three to four month old calf gaining over two pounds per day is already getting less than half of its required nutrients from the dam's milk, even in good pasture conditions.

"If fed a balanced ration, weaned calves at this age can gain very efficiently," he notes. Creep feeding for 30 days prior to weaning will minimize potential problems with getting calves on feed.

As well, weaning calves also helps cows. Dry cows left on pasture will do much better than cows suckling calves. "If the total herd has to be removed from pasture, weaned calves and cows fed separately require up to 40 per cent less feed than if they are kept together," he says.

For short term relief, supplemental feeding of hay or grain is an alternative. Engstrom warns long term supplemental feeding on pasture can significantly damage pastures, "It's better to remove the herd and consider early weaning."

A final possibility is finding a better pasture. "That's not easy in drought areas, but some producers may have access to irrigated pastures, or decide to graze a part of a cereal crop originally intended for grain," he says.

When cattle are moved from a poor level of nutrition to more lush pastures, a two to three week adaption period is recommended. This can be done by limiting the amount of grazing time, or by feeding a good quality hay for a breaking-in period.

If cattle aren't allowed to adapt to the richer pasture, Acute Bovine Pulmonary Emphysema and Edema (ABPEE) can result. Ionophore antibiotics such as Rumensin and Bovatec have been used to help prevent this disorder.

Bloat is another concern, especially if the pasture has a high legume content.

When cattle are put on a cereal crop pasture, such as oats or rye, nitrate levels should be checked to prevent possible poisonings.

"Beef producers should carefully consider the financial implications of any of these management options," Engstrom says.

For more information, contact your Alberta Agriculture regional livestock specialist.

Contact: *Dale Engstrom*
427-8906

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Farm computer use grows

More and more Alberta farmers are incorporating computers into their farm enterprizes.

"The number of farm computers in Alberta quadrupled between the 1986 and the 1991 Census of Agriculture," says Bruce Waldie, Alberta Agriculture provincial computer applications specialist.

Recently released census information shows there were only 1,739 farm computers in Alberta in 1986. The total grew to 7,011 by 1991, and Waldie estimates that number has grown to at least 8,500 since the June 4, 1991 census was taken.

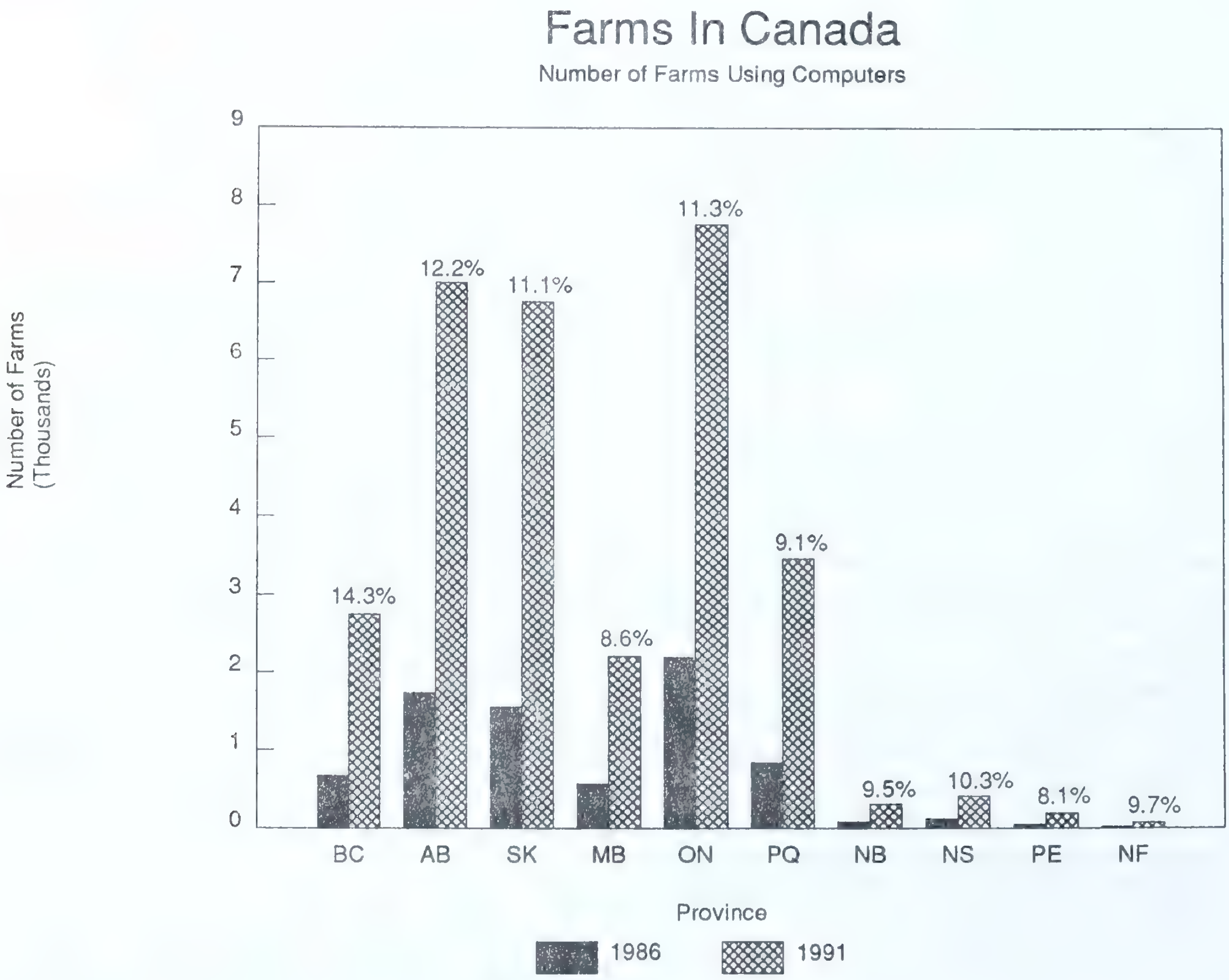
"Computers, on a practical basis, have been with us for about 10 years, but these numbers show that computers have arrived," he says. "The '91 census gives us a very good idea of where we stand on the adoption curve. Adoption of a new technology takes time, but it seems we've already moved through the first two stages—innovators and early adopters—to the early majority who intentionally choose the new technology because it's been proven."

Waldie also notes farm computer use has grown across Canada. This use indicates there is a sizeable market for agriculture specific software, he says, and it's growing every day. "We are now at the point where computers and software are built with the average person in mind, and we have a large enough market to sustain companies interested in providing quality, agriculture specific services."

He adds the growth in farm computer use is exciting and gratifying for Alberta Agriculture staff who have promoted computer use and taught classes. Since 1986, Alberta Agriculture has provide over 750 classes to over 6,000 participants in the Computers on Wheels program.

Computers on Wheels is a mobile service based at four agricultural colleges around the province. Three introductory courses are available on computers for farm use, computerized financial records, and spreadsheets and databases. For more information on the program, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: *Bruce Waldie*
556-4243



Technology transfer takes time, patience, understanding

When the first tractors appeared, some people said they would never replace horses doing fieldwork, but they did.

"This process took many years," notes Russ Horvey, "and, it's probably one of the best examples of the time technology transfer can take. Starting with the innovators who used steam tractors early in the century through to non-adapters who used horses for a majority of their work into the 1960s."

Horvey, provincial co-ordinator of the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) program, says the time it takes for a new technology to be accepted and adopted sometimes isn't understood. "Some producers are wondering why proven soil conservation practices aren't being adopted more quickly. For them it's difficult not to be impatient and frustrated when they know a new technology exists to better protect soil, but others are taking too long to use that technology."

But humans, being what they are, need time to change. "Just because we are aware of some new piece of technology, doesn't mean there's an interest for us to try it. Something has to spark that interest.

"For example, a farmer might be aware of zero tillage, but isn't interested until hearing it costs less and crop yields are equal to or better than conventional tillage," says Horvey.

But knowledge is required to build on the interest and awareness he adds. Some farmers will need to gather sufficient information before actually trying the technology. This can come from a variety of sources: newspapers, news letters, scientific journals and magazines; media reports on radio and television; extension personnel and other specialists; meetings, courses, workshops; field days, field trials, tours, trade shows and demonstrations; and farmer-to-farmer consultation. Armed with knowledge, comes the trial and then the practice is evaluated. If there are sufficient advantages, then the new technology is adopted.

"This can be a bottle neck. Most new farming practices aren't adopted until farmers talk at length with other farmers, resource specialists and or researchers. When there are only a few persons in all of Alberta, for example, with the detailed knowledge to pass on to others, technology transfer can be slow," he says.

Horvey also points out different types of people adopt new technology more quickly that others. A community can be divided into five different categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards (non-adoptors).

The first people to try a new technology are the innovators. Innovators are often viewed skeptically. "Their new technology usually has wrinkles that need to be ironed out," he says. "If these wrinkles are perceived as reasons for not adopting the new technology, rather than obstacles to be overcome, then acceptance of the technology in a particular community can be set back many years."

The open-minded early adopter watches the innovator closely. "When they try the new technology it's usually with more success, after those wrinkles get ironed out, so they are often viewed with more respect in a community," he says. When a majority of people have a positive view, then comes the stage of early majority, who do things intentionally, and then the more doubtful late majority adopters start using the technology. Finally, there is what is known as the laggard, who stubbornly hangs onto traditional methods.

"Those stages take time," Horvey adds, "If the innovator has to go through the six stages of adopting a new farming practice, thenthe early adopters do and so on, years may go by. As many as 30 years or more could go by before the majority of a community adopts a new technology.

"And while we are anxious to preserve soils and 30 years is a very long time, hopefully a better understanding of the adoption and technology transfer process will help us accelerate adoption of better farming practices."

Both the CARTT program and Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) stress the importance of technology transfer he adds.

Contact: *Russ Horvey*
422-4385

Planning for best farm water supply

The success of any farm water supply comes in its planning.

Assessing your current and future water needs is the starting point says Dale Evert of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) in Vegreville. "As a rule you should grow into your water system and not out of it."

To find yearly needs, add up daily water requirements and multiply by 365. Then add on any special seasonal requirements such as watering a garden or shelterbelt he notes.

Daily water requirements are estimated as follows: human, 60 gallons per day; dairy cow, 36 gallons per day; beef cow, 15 gallons per day; hogs four gallons per day; sheep, three gallons per day; and 100 chickens, seven gallons per day.

"If a dugout is your only water source, size it to hold at least a two-year water supply," Evert says. "Provision should also be made for losses from evaporation, seepage and ice build-up in the winter."

A farm water supply can be a dugout or a well, or both. "One of your planning considerations is whether one water source will meet your demands and whether a well or a dugout will be your best source," he says.

A well-planned system can make a real difference he adds. "That difference can be in a clear glass of water or one with a faint, distasteful smell, or between the option of using a dishwasher or just the kitchen sink to do your dishes."

Whether planning a dugout or well, there are some "dos" and "don'ts" he adds. With a dugout, soil conditions must be tested

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before construction. The dugout should be located away from roads, buildings and power lines. The drainage area should be large enough to fill the dugout in a year with an average amount of precipitation. As well, spoil piles must be left in a stable condition after construction.

Don't build a dugout on a slough or marsh he advises. Nor should the site be in an area that can be contaminated by farmyard runoff. Once the dugout is built, don't allow livestock direct access.

One concern with a well is how fast it produces water. "If the source is slow, then a cistern may be required to ensure there is enough water to supply peak demands," he says. The groundwater supply shouldn't be over-pumped he adds.

Ken Williamson, regional engineering technologist with Alberta Agriculture in Red Deer, says when drilling a well it's important to investigate ground water supply. "Neighbours are one source of information, and so are local well drillers. Even better is Alberta Environment's groundwater information service."

Farmers planning a new water system to improving their existing system can contact their local Alberta Agriculture district office or Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) office for assistance.

"In order to be eligible for financial assistance, your project must have prior approval from the PFRA," notes Evert.

Contact: Dale Evert Ken Williamson
632-2919 340-5324

Consider economics of farm injuries

Farm safety is an economic concern says Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager.

"There's no doubt about it, injuries are expensive," says Solomon Kyeremanteng. "While that seems obvious in the case of a farmer losing a limb, for example, with the cost of a prothesis and adjustments to equipment, even a minor injury has a cost attached. With a broken leg, for example, you probably couldn't work for at least six weeks, so there's the cost of extra help."

"Even a slight injury that kept you out of the field during haying or harvest could be costly just in terms of its critical timing," he adds. Personal injury doesn't take into account damage to equipment and time and money required to repair or replace that equipment he also notes. Injuries also take their toll on a farm family.

Taking care during those critical time periods is the theme of the 1992 National Farm Safety Week from July 25 through 31. The theme, harvesting the benefits of farm safety, points to being more aware of farm safety during busy and critical time periods.

"Often, because of the weather, farmers hurry to finish work. And while they certainly face pressures, the small amount of time it requires to be safety wise is to their advantage," he says.

The awareness week is an ideal time to evaluate how safe your farm and farming practices are Kyeremanteng adds. A suggested activity is a farm safety hike drawing the family together with a checklist of areas to examine for their safety.

"Reminding farm families with children to be aware of potential dangers is important, but farm safety rules also apply to grandchildren that visit. And even if children aren't around your farm, there are still places and ways to improve your own farm safety," he says. "Summer vacation time is likely to bring a variety of people and activites to the farm, and being safe saves money, time and agony."

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

4-H showcased in a 75th birthday party

About 4,000 people are expected in Calgary on the August long weekend to celebrate 75 years of the 4-H movement in Alberta.

4-H Showcase'92 from July 31 through August 2 is a special project of the Alberta 4-H 75th Anniversary Committee. As well as displaying the wide variety of 4-H activities Alberta clubs undertake, the weekend is a family festival, anniversary party and reunion rolled into one.

"For the $30 registration you get more than full value just on the entertainment alone," says Mahlon Weir of Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch and a member of the anniversary committee. He adds Showcase'92 is open to members of the public.

Among the entertainment highlights are George Fox in concert followed by a dance with the band Applejack on Saturday evening and a family dance on Friday evening with the Family McDade Band.

Saturday evening also has the largest ceremony dedicated to the 75th anniversary. All 4-H members and leaders in attendance willkick off the event in a parade of clubs and regions. Shirley McClellan, associate agriculture minister, will take part in the ceremonies. She will be presented with a set of commemorative medallions struck for the 75th anniversary.

Opening ceremonies on Friday evening will feature the official unveiling of the 912-page, 75th anniversary history book. "Saturday at 5 p.m. six gold editions will auctioned," notes Weir, "Numbers one through five, plus, for some, lucky number 13."

Bench and livestock shows are also on the Showcase'92 agenda. Projects in the bench show range through foods and clothing, to woodworking and small engines. Beef, light horse, heavy horse, sheep and dairy shows are also scheduled.

The provincial public speaking finals, a festival stage with jugglers to cowboy poets, 75th anniversary fashion shows, Saturday afternoon barbeque, reunion corner and a 4-H store with a wide variety of memorabilia are also part of Showcase'92 activities.

Contact: Mahlon Weir Gail Companion
422-4444 652-2873

Agri-News briefs

4-Hers Operation Enterprise bound

Two Alberta 4-H members will be plunged into an extensive business management seminar at Operation Enterprize. Tami Egeland of Vauxhall and Gina Harty of Swan Hills travelled to Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia yesterday (July 19). They will participate in a 10-day program designed to help delegates become stronger managers and leaders, assist with career decisions and set personal goals. Top executives from the business world will be involved in group discussions, workshops and one-on-one communication with the delegates. Egeland and Harty were chosen to attend the seminar at the recent provincial 4-H selections program in May. Trip awards are based on 4-H and community involvement as well as interpersonal skills. The Alberta Energy Company and Nelson Lumber are the trip sponsors. The delegates will return to Alberta on July 28. For more information, contact Marguerite Stark or Janice Taylor in Airdrie at 948-8510.

PDP at Battle Lake

While PDP may sound like the initials of a new political party, it's not even close. People Developing People (PDP) is a unique program developed for 13 and 14 year old 4-H members running this week (July 20 through 25) at the Alberta 4-H Centre at Battle Lake. Through a combination of personal development and recreational activities this year's delegates will "come out of their shell". "Come out of your shell" is the 1992 theme. Small group sessions deal with co-operation, decision making and leisure wellness. Delegates are sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Agriculture Canada, the Alberta Wheat Pool, United Grain Growers and Husky Oil. For more information, contact Ray Hoppins, PDP director, in Airdrie at 948-8572.

Barley trials/wheat disease trials field day July 30

The Alberta Barley Commission variety trials, plus wheat disease trials, will be highlighted on July 30 at an information afternoon. The site is 0.5 km east on Highway 42 from the Penhold overpass and then 2 km south on the Highway 2 service road. The afternoon starts with an Alberta Barley Commission update at 1 p.m. Twelve malt, feed and hullless barley varieties will be on display. Steve Slopek, Alberta Agriculture crop protection specialist, will discuss barley diseases as well as walk participants through wheat disease trials, wheat variety effect (copper trials) and wheat fungicide trials. For more information, contact the Alberta Agriculture Innisfail district office at 227-6565.

Sheep breeders invites recognition nominations

The Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association is planning to recognize people who have advanced their industry. The association is inviting nominations for the Alberta Shepherds Recognition award. The awards are open to both novice and expert shearers, instructors, extension personnel, shepherds, business people and others who have made contributions to the industry. The association plans to present the awards to deserving individuals on an annual or bi-annual basis. The second recognition awards banquet is planned for November 21 at the Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission producer forum in Red Deer. Nominations for the awards close on September 30. For more information, contact Gail Dietz at 212, 6715 - 8th Street NE, Calgary, Alberta, T2E 7H7, call 295-2185 or FAX 275-8009.

Innisfail zero till tour July 24

Five different projects are on the agenda of a zero till tour in the Innisfail area on July 24. Seven years of zero till, a grassed waterway project, zero tilled cereals into sod and a carrot operation are among the tour highlights. The tour runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and lunch will be provided. The tour is sponsored by Monsanto, CASCI and CARTT. To pre-register by July 20, or for more information, call the Alberta Agriculture Innisfail district office at 227-6565.

Southern pulse field day July 30

Peas, lentils and beans are in the spotlight during the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission (Zone 1) tour and field day July 30. The day long event includes tours in the Coaldale area as well as the Agriculture Canada Lethbridge research station. Included are on-farm demonstration projects, CASCI projects and the latest Agriculture Canada research in bean breeding, weed control and disease biocontrol. Particular projects include lentil, pea and dry bean regional tests plots; an alternate crops trial plot; solid seeded beans; and, Indian Head lentils and lathyrus conservation trials. The registration fee includes a barbeque lunch. Pre-registration is required. Contact the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission office in Lethbridge at 327-0626; or, Alberta Agriculture district offices in Taber (223-7907), Bow Island (545-2233) or Lethbridge (381-5125).

Future of Farming seminar August 5

The founder of holistic resource management will be in Stony Plain on August 5 for a one day seminar on the future of farming. Allan Savory will address the future of agriculture and present information about the interconnection between healthy land, healthy profits and healthy communities. A limited number of seats are available for the seminar at the Stony Plain Community Centre. Preregistration is required no later than July 28. The registration cost is $10. The seminar was organized by a committee of local farmers and representatives of Alberta Agriculture and the University of Alberta, and is sponsored by TransAlta Utilities. For more information, or to preregister call (collect) Kelli Booth or Paige Eisworth in Edmonton at 498-7020.

Olds area pulse commission/wheat pool tour

Zone 2 of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission and the Alberta Wheat Pool are sponsoring a tour on July 31 at the Olds plots. The tour begins at 10 a.m. at plots east of Olds (go east on Highway 27 from the Highway 2 Olds overpass, and south 6.5 km at the first corner) with a look at foreign nursery trials, seeding rate studies, green pea color studies, seed source studies, forage plots and a yield and performance demonstration. After lunch, the tour moves to Olds College and a regional pea variety test, foreign screening trials, seeding rate studies, fababean co-op, fababean screening trials, pea/barley plots and pea/barley time of cutting trials. Please pre-register by July 27 by calling the Alberta Agriculture district office in Olds at 556-4220, or in Innisfail at 227-6565.

August field days in Lacombe

The Alberta Agriculture Field Crop Development Centre will hold a cereal crop field day on August 6. Activities begin at 1 p.m. The program includes a tour of plant breeding and agronomy plots and an opportunity to talk with researchers. The centre's research farm, located on the east side of Highway 2A on the south side of Lacombe, has one of the largest cereal crop breeding projects in North America. The following Monday, August 10, a crops tour in the County of Lacombe is planned. The tour begins at 9 a.m. and provides an opportunity to see on-farm research being carried out by industry, producer groups and government. Among the tour stops are glyphosate resistant canola plots, Pika winter triticale, Sun wheat, White-flowered fababean plots, herbicide plots and pulse crop plots. Bus transportation will be provided. For more information, contact the Alberta Agriculture district office in Lacombe at 782-3301.

Hall of Fame nominations close July 31

Nominations for Alberta Agriculture's Hall of Fame close on July 31. The call of nominations is for induction in March 1993. For nomination forms and more information, contact the Information Services Division, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or call 427-2127.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

July 27, 1992

Early weaning option for beef producers

Beef producers faced with shortages of grass or water should consider early weaning says an Alberta Agriculture nutritionist.

Better growth of calves and less loss of condition on cows are the benefits of this management option says Dale Engstrom, acting head of the animal nutrition section. "There are several advantages for both cows and calves. A dry cow has a much lower requirement for feed and water than a suckled cow, so is better able to maintain her body weight on relatively poor quality pasture.

"The young, early weaned calf—if fed properly—is more efficient than an older calf in converting feed to grain," he adds.

Seldom practised in Alberta, early weaning of three to four month old calves is a routine practice in many areas of the U.S. Studies there have confirmed the benefits of early weaning. An Ohio study, for example, found early weaned calves (110 days) and their dams were 43 per cent more efficient in converting feed into calf gain than cow-calf pairs weaned at the more traditional 220 days.

"Early weaning allows a more efficient use of the limited feed you may have in drought conditions. That feed efficiency means it's cheaper to feed weaned calves and cows separately rather than as suckling pairs," says Engstrom.

If calves are weaned early, it does mean more work than when a herd is on grass. "But, the economics are still favorable," says Engstrom, "Even taking into account the extra labor and management required."

Calf nutrition and management are crucial to success in early weaning.

A balanced ration is key, and the most important ingredient is a good quality forage. Silage or hay can be used, says Engstrom, as long as it's not too mature, is free from dust and mold, and is readily eaten by the calves.

Grain should be fed at approximately 1.5 per cent of body weight. As well, it should be coarsely ground or rolled. Whole oats can be used instead of barley, but the amount should be increased by 10 per cent.

"Calves need a highly palatable grain mix, so they will eat enough," Engstrom notes. "You might need to reduce dustiness by adding two or three per cent of wet molasses or canola oil."

Rations must include all necessary vitamins and minerals. Protein supplements should contain little or no urea.

One ration Engstrom suggests is a mix of 65.5 per cent alfalfa-grass hay (about seven pounds per head per day), 25 per cent barley grain (2.7 lb./head/day) and 9.5 per cent of a 32 per cent beef supplement (a pound per head per day). Barley silage supplemented with barley and beef supplement is also suitable. Both rations are appropriate for 300 pound calves gaining two pounds per day.

To ease the transition between mother's milk and rations, Engstrom recommends creep feeding calves for 30 days before weaning. "This will ensure calves eat enough after they're weaned. For maximum benefit, the ration you use for creep feeding should be similar to the after-weaning ration."

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Producers will also need suitable calf feeding facilities for both creep feeding and after-weaning notes Engstrom.

Contact: Dale Engstrom
427-8906

Eggs cholesterolphobia victim

One of the many victims of cholesterolphobia is the egg, and the result has been a variety of new egg products on the market says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

Cholesterolphobia has resulted from consumer concerns and confusion says Aileen Whitmore. "People have limited their egg consumption. In response, egg producers have looked to regain their market share by introducing new products."

The new products range through eggs with lowered cholesterol to egg substitutes with yolks removed and replaced. By controlling a hen's diet and age plus the size of egg yolk, researchers have developed the lower cholesterol egg. But while cholesterol has been reduced by around 20 per cent for a typical egg, the eggs themselves are smaller notes Whitmore. "Some of the egg substitutes," she adds, "have vitamins, minerals and color added to recreate the natural characteristics of eggs."

A University of Alberta researcher has created a "designer" egg with modified yolk-fat. These eggs have increased omega-3 fatty acids achieved by feeding hens canola or flax seed. Some studies have shown these fatty acids can play a role in changing blood cholesterol.

While some people might feel more comfortable with these kinds of special products, Whitmore says they should be prepared to pay extra for that sense of comfort. And she says, eggs shouldn't be avoided. "Eggs, just as they are, are very nutritious. Plus, as egg promotions point out, they are also tasty, versatile and economical."

"Consumers are hung up in the idea of cholesterol-free," she adds. "The cholesterol myth has become very powerful. But people need to know dietary cholesterol—the cholesterol in the foods we eat—is the least important factor in your serum or blood cholesterol. Our dietary fat intake is what affects serum cholesterol, so watching the fats we eat is much more important."

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

New bankruptcy law impacts farmers

The updated federal Bankruptcy Act gives farmers some added rights and protection when a purchaser of their products becomes insolvent.

"Two new sections in the revised act will interest farmers," says Paul Gervais of the farm business management branch in Olds. "These two sections provide special rights for suppliers and farmers who deliver products to a purchaser who subsequently declares bankruptcy."

The legislation gives suppliers and farmers the right to repossess unpaid goods, and these rights are above every other creditor's claim or right against the purchaser for those goods, regardless of any other federal or provincial act or law Gervais notes. The provisions apply to any farmer or supplier who supplies livestock for slaughter, feed, grain, hay, fertilizer, chemicals or other inputs.

Rules in the new law require suppliers to present a written claim to an insolvent purchaser, the trustee or receiver for goods that were delivered, but not paid for, within a 30-day period prior to the bankruptcy or receivership. That notice of claim must be filed within 30 days of the bankruptcy.

Farmers should note this time period for agricultural products is reduced to goods delivered within 15 days prior of the bankruptcy or receivership, apparently due to the 'perishable' nature of agricultural products says Gervais.

The purchaser, trustee or receiver must provide the farmer with a written notice admitting the farmer's right to repossess. The farmer must exercise this right within 10 days after presentation of the written notice, unless the period is extended by mutual agreement says Cal Brandley, Alberta Agriculture's agricultural solicitor based in Lethbridge.

"Farmers and suppliers can only repossess products that haven't been used or further processed by the purchaser," Brandley notes. For example, a farmer can't repossess feed that has been processed or the livestock that ate the feed. The goods must be in the possession of purchaser, trustee or receiver; be identified as the goods delivered; and, not be fully paid for. As well, the goods must be in the same state as they were on delivery, and not been resold or are subject to any agreement for sale.

"And either party may apply to the courts if they can't come to an agreement," he adds.

The updated legislation also has a mechanism for a business in financial trouble to work out an agreement with its suppliers. "A purchaser can give a farmer a notice of intention," says Gervais. This is a proposal to work out an arrangement between the purchaser and the farmer. The notice doesn't affect the 30-day period after goods were delivered but not paid for.

"The new legislation reflects new realities," adds Gervais. "For example, some businesses in difficulty can be workable again through reorganization or restructuring in co-operation with suppliers."

Changes to Canada's 40-year old Bankruptcy Act were passed by the federal Parliament in late June. While the act was given Royal Assent then, regulations still have not been finalized.

For more information on the recent changes to the Bankruptcy Act, contact Gervais in Olds at 556-4240, or Brandley in Lethbridge at 381-5131. Both numbers are toll-free in Alberta through the RITE system.

Contact: Paul Gervais Cal Brandley
556-4240 381-5131

Ag ambassador fair moves to February

The third annual Alberta agricultural ambassador school fair will move to February after being held in November for the last two years.

"By changing dates we hope to have even more school participation," says Betty Gabert, co-ordinator of Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program and one of the fair's organizers. The fair will be held February 26 and 27 in Medicine Hat.

Changed dates aren't the only alteration to the fair. The fair has been expanded to two days from the previous one-day Saturday event. The fair will start on a Friday in 1993 to encourage participation from Medicine Hat area and other schools. "We hope schools will be able to make field trips to the fair on the Friday," she says.

The second day is more of a family day Gabert adds, with a number of activities geared for everyone such as a mock auction, sheep shearing and a sheep dog demonstration.

Prize lists with the fair classes will be sent out to Alberta schools in the fall issue of the Ag in the Classroom newsletter. "This September delivery should allow teachers more time to incorporate agriculturally related projects into their activities, and also maximize project exposure at other schools fairs such as science fairs," Gabert says.

The fair's competition categories encompass all grades from one through 12 and involves topics and projects related to agriculture in social studies, science and language arts.

Modifications have been made to the competition categories she adds. "These changes are in response from teachers and sponsors. In particular we want to attract more complex entries at the junior and senior high school levels. As well, there are more group classes in the lower grade levels," she says.

Sponsors have already been confirmed in all 29 of the fair classes. Each contributes $150 in prize money per class for a total of $4,350.

In another development, Medicine Hat College has volunteered to supply judges from students in its education program. "This a mutually beneficial relationship," notes Gabert, "giving students experience and saving the fair judge expenses."

This fair supports the Agricultural Ambassador Program. The program's goal is to designate a teacher agricultural ambassador in every Alberta school. "We've been very pleased by the interest generated to date both in the agriculture industry through the financial and other support the fair has received, and also the enthusiasm students and teachers have for the event," Gabert says.

The ambassador program, sponsored by Alberta Pool, is an outgrowth of the Summer Agricultural Education Institute. Designed to increase agricultural awareness, the institute is an intensive 12-day, full credit, fourth year university level course for teachers. In 1992 the Institute will be held at Lakeland College in Vermilion from August 10 to 21. The United Farmers of Alberta sponsor scholarships to the institute.

Contact: *Betty Gabert*
427-2402

Provincial 4-H heifer show draws 125 members

The recent 16th annual provincial 4-H heifer show and judging contest drew 125 members from across Alberta, from Worsley in the north to Pincher Creek in the south.

"Participation was right up there, and despite the rain we had a great show," says Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H livestock specialist.

Many familiar names were back in the winners circle in 1992. One of those names was multiple winner Carrie Cholack, 13, of the Lamont club. Cholack teamed with her brother Stephen to win both the intermediate team grooming and judging contests. Teamed with Tova Place of Nanton Beef, Cholack won high show ring team judging. In her own right, she was second in intermediate showmanship to Shannon Northay of the Bashaw Beef Club and showed the reserve champion Charolais heifer.

Another brother and sister team also made its mark at the show. Kristi and Kurt Trefiak of Edgerton combined for top honors in both junior team grooming and judging team. They won the same grooming award at the 1991 show. Kristi also took home first place in junior showmanship in 1992.

A brother combination was one-two in the junior freshman competition. The freshman classes are for 4-H members participating at their provincial show. Members are judged on their showmanship skills as well as their animal's confirmation.

Richard Grant, 12, and his brother David, 11, of Bow-Inn Beef were grand and reserve champions respectively with their yearling Saler heifers. Both repeated in the championship class for "other purebreds", and Richard went on to be runner-up in the junior showmanship class.

A senior team also swept the team grooming and judging contests. St. Paul Multi Club members Denis Kotowich and Kyla Makowecki also placed third in the show ring team judging. Kotowich was also runner-up for high judging reasons.

"The show ring judging competition really prepares members to go out and be judges," Wiegman says. "Members use all the judging skills they learn about placing animals according to confirmation, they have to present their oral reasons to the crowd and work as a judging team in the ring." Jason French and Syd Gerig of the Double Diamond Club of Westlock were second to the Cholack-Place team in the show ring judging competition.

Curtis Werenka, 17, of Sangudo was another multiwinner. Werenka's yearling Red Angus was declared the supreme champion purebred at the show. He also was the senior champion showman. Kim Svitich, 16, of Chipman was second to

Cont'd on page 4

Werenka in the showmanship class. West Didsbury Club member Bobbi-Gayle Hosegood took supreme reserve purebred champion honors with her two-year old Simmental cow.

Cross-bred supreme champion was a Maine-Anjou\Angus cross yearling shown by Colin McNiven of the Dusty Plains Multi Club (Duchess). Brownfield Beef member Ken Adair's Simmental cross yearling took reserve honors.

Senior freshman honors went to Kelly Ulry of the Olds Multi Club with her yearling Simmental. Dale McGlynn of the Pincher Creek Foothills Club was the reserve champion with a yearling Red Angus.

Other winners in the judging contest were: Katie Krotech, Hastings Coulee Club, high junior individual; Maureen Mappin, County Livestock Judging Club (Byemoor), high intermediate individual; and, Scott Swanek,Lethbridge-Coaldale Club, high senior individual and high individual reasons.

The club herdmanship award went a different direction for the first time in five years with the Pincher Creek Foothills Club emerging as the winner. Runner-up St. Paul Multi had won the last four herdmanship competitions.

The Bashaw and District Agricultural Society hosts the provincial competition and Alberta Treasury Branches is its major sponsor.

Contact: *Henry Wiegman*
427-2541

Agri-News briefs

18th annual ram test sale draws national buyers

Buyers from across Canada saw some of the best performance tested ram lambs and yearlings in the nation at the 18th annual Alberta Ram Test Station sale earlier this month. All 40 of the rams on offer were sold at an average price of $328.62. High selling ram in the sale was from the Suffolk flock of Brian Kure of Innisfail. The ram was purchased for $660 by Alvin Robbins of Pincher Creek. Tom Seaborn of Rocky Mountain House had the top indexing ram at the test station. His Suffolk ram had an average daily gain of 0.616 kg. The Alberta Sheep Breeders Trophy for the highest group average daily gain on four or more rams went to Bill Matejka of Ponoka. His Suffolk rams averaged 0.561 kg/day. The Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Trophy for the yearling with the highest overall index on the wool breeds test went to A.J. Shown Co. of Stavely. This year 174 rams from 27 contributors were entered on test. Only rams above the station average daily gain for their breed are considered for the sale. A culling committee also screens the rams for teeth, legs and testicles. For more information, contact Kim Stanford, sheep specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge at 381-5150, or Wray Whitmore in Edmonton at 427-5083.

Tracks and tires performance demonstration Aug.6

The Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre and University of Alberta offer a demonstration of track and four-wheel drive tractor traction principles August 6 at the University of Alberta Ellerslie research station. The afternoon field day begins at 1:30 p.m. Tillage and traction experts will be on hand to discuss tractor ballasting, power hop, radial tire pressures, slip and to show how these affect tractor performance. The Ellerslie Research Station is located two miles west and one-half mile south of Ellerslie. For more information, contact Murray Green in Airdrie at 948-8525.

Leadership skills highlighted as 4-Hers go east

Leadership and presentation skills are in the spotlight for two Alberta 4-H members who go to Saskatchewan later this week. Michael Hegland of Wembley and Megan Reese of Milk River will attend the 4-H senior leadership camp at the Saskatchewan 4-H Centre, Camp Rayner, near Diefenbaker Lake. The camp runs from July 29 through August 4. Delegates from the three Prairie provinces participate in seminars, listen to guest speakers and join group activities dealing with current events. Hegland and Reese were chosen to attend the camp at the annual provincial 4-H selections program in May. Trip awards are based on 4-H and community involvement as well as interpersonal skills. For more information contact Hegland at 766-2450, Reese at 647-2102, or Marguerite Stark or Janice Taylor in Airdrie at 948-8510.

Equestrian centre donated to Lakeland College

Lakeland College has been officially presented a $462,000 donation in the form of the Hill Equestrian Centre. The 11.9 acre centre just southeast of Lloydminster includes a barn, riding arena and house. Vermilion Countinuing Education, which offers

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an extensive range of equine programming, will manage the centre. Public riding lessons, summer camps and boarding space are potential uses. The donation was made by Dorothy and Jim Hill of Lloydminster. The land was homestead by Dorothy's father and has been in the family since 1912. The equine centre was constructed about 10 years ago. For more information, contact Doug Schmit, Lakeland College president, in Vermilion at 853-8510.

Safflower growers association field tour Aug. 4

The Alberta Safflower Growers Association 1992 Summer Tour will highlight the latest in safflower breeding. Stops include the Agriculture Canada Lethbridge research station safflower breeding and variety trials, A.C. Stirling variety grower sites in the Lethbridge area, on-farm sunola and sunwheat demonstration projects, and alternate crop trial plots in Coaldale. A noon barbeque will follow the tour. Preregistration is requested by Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge at 381-5124.

Innovative lift provides disabled farmers with freedom

A Saskatchewan company is ready to market a lift designed to give disabled farmers more independence and mobility. The "Freedom Lift" allows farmers to lift themselves up to a variety of farm equipment, instead of having separate lifts for each piece of machinery. It can also be used for other motor vehicles, recreational vehicles and buildings. The portable lift mounts into the back of a half ton truck. Bob Sollosy, of Freedom Technologies Incorporated of Saskatoon, says the lift apparently is the only one of its kind. The company exhibited it at the recent Independence '92 show in Vancouver. Ten lifts are expected to be for sale at the end of July. The cost of the lift installed with a customized platform is $18,800. For more information in Alberta, call the Alberta distributor in Edmonton at 424-0694 or 1-800-232-9804; or Freedom Technologies Incorporated in Saskatoon at (306)244-1508.

Coming agricultural events notice

- Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in September through December, 1992 or early in 1993? Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by **August 21, 1992** ***to:***
Agri-News Editor
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next list will be ***September 7, 1992****)*

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

August 3, 1992

Economics of chelated minerals need evaluation

Livestock need trace minerals, but the best source of those minerals has become a question says an Alberta Agriculture nutritionist.

Since chelated, or organic, minerals have come on the market a debate has begun on their value relative to inorganic trace mineral salts used to supplement livestock diets says Barry Yaremcio. "There's been the suggestion that chelated minerals are a much better source of trace minerals, but that evaluation isn't complete."

The main advantage of chelates are their bioavailability. Bioavailability is how much of the mineral is absorbed, moved to where it's needed and converted to a useful form by the animal. "However, when this effectiveness is weighed against cost, it's not clear if producers can afford to feed chelates," Yaremcio says.

The highest bioavailability given to a chelate mineral is 32 per cent higher than the standard sulphate form Yaremcio notes. "This suggests that it's 32 per cent 'better' than the salt form. However, since chelates are approximately double the cost of feeding inorganic minerals, they don't make sense economically. Using higher levels of inorganic salt forms would be considerably less expensive.

"If continued use of an inorganic trace mineralized salt doesn't correct your problem, then verify that you are dealing with a trace mineral problem. That means looking at your management, feed and facilities. Once you've assured yourself that you are dealing with a trace mineral deficiency, then consider a chelated mineral," he says.

"There are a few situations where it may be more reasonable to suffer the consequences of the problem than to correct it using chelates," he adds. "Particularly, when the cost to solve the problem is much greater than the benefits received.

"As we acquire a better understanding of trace mineral problems, and chelates mode of action, there may be more situations where chelates will be beneficial."

Cobalt, iodine, copper, manganese, zinc and selenium are all essential trace minerals for a cattle herd. Several of these elements are required for proper functioning of the immune system. Deficiencies may lessen an animal's ability to fight off diseases.

Reduced fertility and growth rates—long calving seasons and reduced weaning weights—are production problems associated with trace mineral deficiencies.

Contact: *Barry Yaremcio*
427-6361

Dugout construction key in controlling plant growth

Algae isn't the only villian that can affect water quality in farm dugouts.

"Decaying plants significantly deteriorate dugout water quality," says Bob Buchanan, Alberta Agriculture regional engineering technologist in Barrhead. "Some taste, odor and color problems can result as well as plugged water intakes."

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Three main groups of plants can be found in dugouts: floating, submerged (below the water surface) and emergent (above the water surface). Each category requires slightly different control measures Buchanan says.

The most effective preventative measure is in dugout construction he adds. "As with algae control, proper dugout construction can keep nutrient rich sediment out of dugouts. Deeper dugouts with steeper end slopes reduce the shallow area plants prefer for growth."

The most common floating plant in Alberta is duckweed. Never a problem unless the dugout is well protected from the wind, duckweed can be controlled by providing more wind action across the dugout. Chemical control with Reglone A (containing diquat) is also effective.

Submerged plants such as the pondweed family, coontail, Canada water weed and northern watermilfoil grow best in shallow dugouts. "Plants that grow below the surface are seldom a significant problem in deeper dugouts, between 15 and 20 feet deep," says Buchanan.

Dragging a chain along the dugout bottom effectively cuts off the plants and so controls them. Once cut off, they float to the surface and can be removed. Submerged plants can also be controlled with Reglone A (containing diquat), or a hydrated lime treatment.

Bull rushes and cattails—emergent plants—are tougher to control. "A number of research projects found that a combination of cutting, burning and flooding these plants will help control them," says Buchanan.

Plants that grow above the water surface generally prefer shallow water six to 24 inches deep. Using a backhoe to deepen shallow areas is an effective prevention. Buchanan adds some chemicals effectively control these plant types, but they aren't registered for use on farm dugouts.

For more information on improving dugout water quality, contact your Alberta Agriculture district or regional office.

Contact: Bob Buchanan
674-8253

Teamwork recipe for soil conservation success

Take a farm family with a severe salinity problem. Add an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist, some regional and provincial conservation and development branch staff and a supportive local agricultural service board. Mix well with good ideas, the right equipment, a sense of humor and a lot of patience.

"That's a recipe for a co-operative soil conservation demonstration/research project," says Vasile Klaassen, regional soil conservation co-ordinator in Airdrie. "And over the next few years, this project will provide Trochu area farmers with valuable advice on what types of forages will do best in their saline areas, and the best way to reclaim a saline area on their own farm."

The farm family in this recipe is Mike and Bernie Frere. The Trochu farmers have watched a piece of their land become increasingly saline over the last 10 years. When Ken King, the district agriculturist in Three Hills, suggested this spring there was a possible solution to their problem, and the project could be a demonstration site using Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiatives (CASCI) funds, the Freres gave the go-ahead. As well, neighbouring farmers Jim and Wade Christie agreed to co-operate as a corner of their land is affected by the salinity.

Klaassen and King visited the site and confirmed that both a complete dryland salinity investigation was needed and the site was suitable for a demonstration of forages used to reclaim saline areas.

"We also discussed the need for local research on salt tolerant forages and for construction of a grassed waterway to lower water erosion risk and help reduce water ponding on the site," she says. At this point Art Thomas, agricultural fieldman for the Municipal District of Kneehill, and the Kneehill Agricultural Service Board became part of the team. The service board agreed to provide the equipment, manpower and seed for the project using CASCI funding.

Next, Bill Read and Curt Livergood, a dryland salinity investigation service (DSIS) crew from Lethbridge, carried out a detailed salinity investigation and a preliminary survey for the grassed waterway. They also installed water table wells and began monitoring the site.

Preliminary agronomic recommendations for the whole site were made in consultation with the Freres and Don Wentz, Alberta Agriculture's provincial salinity specialist. Then Klaassen designed the research plots using 10 forage varieties. "The objective of the research is to evaluate the performance of these forages on a saline site," notes Klaassen. The research plots will be monitored for three to five years, long enough to evaluate each of the forage varieties used.

Plots were seeded, beginning in late June, using the Kneehill municipality's all till drill. Seeding was also a team operation involving King, two municipal employees—Bruce Summerville and Rob de Beaudrap—and Scott Meers, regional soil conservation agrologist.

Klaassen says an initial attempt to construct the grassed waterway ran into technical difficulties and wet conditions on the site's lower end. A modified route has been surveyed by Syd Abday and Jeff Prochnau of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton. Construction will be done when the conditions are right.

Work on the project will continue through the fall she adds. This includes a detailed salinity map of the research plots, installing soil moisture monitoring sites and routine monitoring of the site. A final DSIS report will outline any further agronomic recommendations for the Freres.

Contact: Vasile Klaassen
948-8543

Cow/calf producers follow feeding trial

Exposing cow/calf producers to how their calves perform in a feedlot was the purpose of a recent project undertaken by the Lakeland Agricultural Research Association (LARA).

"A large majority of cattle producers who raise livestock in the Lac La Biche and Bonnyville area market their calves shortly after weaning or as backgrounded calves," says David Burdek, LARA's general manager. "This project gave the co-operating producers an opportunity to learn about feedlot performance, cost of feeding and carcass quality for a cross-section of their calves."

As well, he notes, dry weather in the last few years has meant area producers have been short of feed. "This project really gave producers a chance to look at custom feeding as an option and see the up-front numbers and carrying costs."

Nine area producers contributed calves to the project that were taken to a feedlot near Lloydminster. LARA paid the trucking costs. The steers were on feed from November until they were sold this spring. The average profit per head was $76.77 with a range from $45.73 to $106.22. Average daily gain for the group was 3.27 lbs./day. The daily gain range was between 2.94 lbs./day and 3.51 lbs./day.

"The project was also important because we looked at carcass evaluation, giving producers a better idea where their calves fit as an end product," he says. Agriculture Canada blue tag summaries with carcass weight, fat cover, ribeye area, marbling, grade and yield were collected.

"Particularly interesting was how the steers graded in the new system that came on stream in June," he adds. About ninety per cent of the carcasses graded A1 (36 of 41) and the rest were A2. "When we looked at the blue tag information on the five A2 carcasses, the yield and ribeye area in relation to carcass weight was generally low."

Carcasses must also have some marbling to make top grades. All the project carcasses graded A, AA or AAA. If no marbling is present, the carcass falls into the B category.

Burdek says the project provided broad exposure to producers at relatively little cost. Besides trucking expenses, LARA ran two field trips to the feedlot over the course of the project. One in December, shortly after the steers went to the feedlot, and again in April before the steers were sold. About 100 people went on the first trip, including 4-H club members from the area.

"The second field trip was longer than planned as the producers spent a lot of time discussing marketing, types of calves and the new grading system," he says.

Success with the first year of the project means it will run again Burdek adds, and he estimates a similar project, starting this fall, will probably attract twice as many participants.

Contact: David Burdek
623-5401

Know your tree before you plant

Planting a tree is a major investment of both time and money, so it's important to be well informed about the tree you choose says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Tree planting is a sound investment," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "Trees add to the aesthetics and beauty of your yard. They increase property value and act as a giant air conditioner. And with a little planning, they can be an enjoyable experience."

Part of planning is considering a tree's particular characteristics, from how fast it grows and its mature height, to any bad habits and the likelihood of insect and disease problems.

"You need to ask yourself a number of questions about the tree and how it fits into your yard," says Barkley. "For example, know how tall it will grow. Often trees are planted where they are either too large or too small for the landscape.

"It's difficult, if not impossible, to keep a large-statured tree small. So, a very large tree shouldn't be planted next to your front door step, a shrub is better. It's best to match the mature height of the plant to its planting site."

Another major decision people make is between evergreen or deciduous she says. "Evergreens give protection from sun and wind year-round, but planted in front of a south window will drastically cut down the amount of light and heat the sun provides in the winter.

"On the other hand, deciduous trees, especially green ash, make excellent shade trees for a southern exposure. The green ash leafs late and drops its leaves early. This allows spring and fall sunshine into your house."

The mature width of the tree is also important. Trees must be located where their maximum width doesn't obstruct a sidewalk or crowd a house.

How close the lowest branches are to the ground is also a consideration. Trees that branch low to the ground, such as a willow, are excellent for wind breaks. If the tree is ornamental, it's best if the first branch is five to nine feet from the ground. This allows living space under the tree.

Mature height and width also play a role in how many trees are needed. "When you plant them, they're small, but they grow. Take into account the tree's eventual height and width and plant accordingly. Be especially careful not to crowd trees," Barkley says.

Root systems are another factor in tree choice. A shallow rooted tree will compete with turf, while some trees have aggressive roots that can plug sewer lines, and heave sidewalks and pavement.

Some trees can be a nuisance she adds. They drop twigs, bark, flowers, needles and fruit. Other trees may require special pruning, spraying, feeding or watering. "If you don't have the extra

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time, then choose a low maintenance tree," she advises.

While every tree will have a certain amount of pest problems, some trees are better choices because they can withstand some pests, or because the pests can be controlled.

Barkley recommends consulting the Alberta Horticultural Guide (Agdex 200/001), talking with a nurseryman in your area, or calling her in Brooks at 362-3391. The guide is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Bon Accord 4-Her conservation award recipient

Attending 4-H conservation camp encouraged Colin Strauss to do something for the environment in his community, and the community he chose was his high school.

For his efforts, Strauss, 17, has been chosen the 1992 recipient of the Grant MacEwan Conservation Award. The award has been presented since 1975 to an Alberta 4-H conservation camper who best spreads the conservation message after attending the provincial 4-H conservation camp.

Strauss, whose family farms on the northern outskirts of Edmonton, will be presented with the award during this year's conservation camp on August 13. The award includes a sculptured plaque and $300.

A student at Archbishop O'Leary High School in Edmonton, Strauss helped found a environmental club at the school after attending the 1990 conservation camp. The club met weekly and organized a number of projects including a juice box and plastics recycling program, and awareness activities such as a library display board and regular announcements. He also spoke about his conservation camp experience at 4-H club and district public speaking competitions.

Each conservation camper studies two of five conservation areas at the camp. Strauss chose soil and water conservation, both topics related to agriculture. But the strongest message he received he says is the environmental movement's rallying cry of "think globally, act locally".

Strauss also describes his conservation camp experience as "the best week of the whole summer".

Strauss will start his sixth year with the Bon Accord 4-H Club in the fall. Currently he plans to study veterinary medicine after he finishes high school.

The Grant MacEwan Conservation Award is named for the former Alberta Lieutenant-Governor and longtime conservation champion. The annual camp and award are sponsored by Alberta Power Limited and Transalta Utilities Corporation and administered by Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

Contact:	*Henry Wiegman*	*Colin Strauss*
	427-2541	*472-6235*
	Mona Hari, Transalta	
	498-7023	

Crops of Alberta open house August 20 and 21

If the crop is grown in Alberta, you'll probably find it in the annual Crops of Alberta display.

The crop display, a one acre site situated outside Alberta Agriculture's Edmonton headquarters building, is designed to promote agricultural awareness and the diversity of crops grown by Alberta farmers.

Over 200 plots of cereals, oilseeds, forages, special crops, herbs and horticultural crops make up Crops of Alberta, a joint project of Alberta Agriculture crop protection branch and the University of Alberta's plant science department. Current varieties as well as historic and newly released varieties are included.

On August 20 and 21 Crops of Alberta will hold a special open house with guided tours. The plots are outside the J.G. O'Donoghue building, 7000-113 Street, in Edmonton. Tours will run at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

"Crops of Alberta is open to visitors anytime," says co-ordinator Deneen Stoby. Signs beside each plot identify the crop and explain its uses, so people can explore on their own. Guided tours are also available.

In 1992 the display includes a salute to the 75th anniversary of the 4-H program in Alberta with the 4-H cloverleaf emblem recreated in plants and flowers.

Crops of Alberta has been presented annually since 1985.

Best viewing of the display is from August through mid-September. For guided tours and more information, contact Stoby at 427-7098 in Edmonton.

Contact:	*Deneen Stoby*	*Denise Maurice*
	427-7098	*427-7098*

Agri-News briefs

Crop insurance, GRIP statements in the mail

All Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) program statements for this crop year should be in Alberta farmers' hands soon. "GRIP statements and some crop insurance payments were all in the mail by the end of July," says Rod Rains, director of program adminstration for the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation. The GRIP statements include the crops covered and the farmer's premiums. He also notes processing this year's statements went much more quickly than last year, the first year of the GRIP program. As well as the GRIP statements, cheques were also mailed for reseeded and unseeded acreage and any hail claims. Rains says claims for all three are down in 1992. "We had about 700 reseeding claims this year, but the average for the last three years has been closer to 1,200," he says. Claims can be made for unseeded acreage after June 20 if conditions have been too wet for seeding. This year's claims totalled around 100, down from 250 in 1991 and 500 in 1992. Rains adds there had been no major hail storms to late July. For more information, contact Rick McConnell in Lacombe at 782-4661.

4-Hers California bound

Two Alberta 4-H members leave for California tomorrow (August 4) for a week long exchange. The Alberta delegates, Kurtis Hewson of Delia and Virginia Holthe of Turin, will stay with a California host family and then join a state 4-H leadership conference in Oakland. The conference is designed to develop leadership skills. Environmental awareness and responsibilities will also be discussed in lectures, group discussions, workshops and one-on-one communication. They will return to Alberta on August 12. Hewson and Holthe were chosen for this exchange at the 1992 provincial 4-H selections program in early May. Trip awards are based on community and 4-H involvement as well as interpersonal skills. This is the second year Alberta delegates have been involved in the California exchange. The trip is sponsored by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. The bank has sponsored a travel exchange trip for 25 years. For more information, contact Hewson at 364-2298 or Holthe at 738-4330; or, Marguerite Stark or Janice Taylor in Airdrie at 948-8510.

Pembina pasture tour August 13

The Pembina Forage Association will hold its 1992 cow/calf pasture tour August 13. The walking tour starts at 4 p.m. at the pasture north of Westlock. A barbeque steak supper follows at the tour at Thortonville Hall. The cost for association members is $5 and $10 for nonmembers. To preregister by August 11, call the Alberta Agriculture Westlock district office at 349-4546.

Spotlight on conservation camp

Over 60 young 4-H members will be at the Alberta 4-H Centre at Battle Lake for the 27th annual Alberta 4-H Conservation Camp August 9 through 14. Most delegates are from Alberta, but participants also hail from Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Montana. Each delegate studies two of five conservation areas. They choose from water, soil, range, forestry, and fish and wildlife, and learn through field trips and classroom activities. Group and study sessions are led by resource specialists from Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Environment, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, Olds College and the sponsoring utility companies. One of the camp highlights is a mock development hearing with delegates taking on roles to examine an environmental issue. Conservation campers are also encouraged to show conservation leadership when they return home. For more information, contact Henry Wiegman in Edmonton at 427-2541.

Conservation award nominations open

Nominations are now open for the 1993 soil conservation awards sponsored by the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) and the **Western Producer**. The awards recognize outstanding commitment and dedication by Alberta farm families and conservation groups for their efforts and leadership in preserving Alberta soils. Award presentations will be made during National Soil Conservation Week in April, 1993. There are two award categories: farm family and group. Nominations for the farm family award must be in to regional soil conservation co-ordinators by November 15. The provincial winner is chosen from the regional finalists. All regional finalists will have their expenses paid to attend the 1994 provincial soil conservation workshop. Nominations for the group award can be made directly to the ACTS office. For more information, contact Russ Evans at Box 1, Site 9, R.R. 5, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2G6, telephone 936-5306 or FAX 936-5523.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

August 10, 1992

Don't take second alfalfa cut too late

Putting off a second alfalfa cut to maximize growth is a temptation alfalfa producers shouldn't give in to says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

That temptation is especially great this year for southern Alberta dryland alfalfa producers says Don Wentz, Lethbridge based provincial soil salinity specialist.

"July moisture has given southern producers the opportunity to maybe get a second cut for the first time in quite a few years," he says. The July moisture follows a dry spring and a disappointing first cut for many producers he adds. However, July precipitation has many farmers looking for a nice second cut.

But they shouldn't delay that second cut too long he says. "You may have to sacrifice some growth in order to protect your alfalfa stand from winter kill."

Alfalfa requires about 30 days of regrowth before a frost. This gives the plant enough time for the roots to replace their food reserves and give them enough hardiness to make it through a severe winter. "If plants don't get that time to replenish their root reserves, they could be subject to winter kill," he says.

So, if the normal frost period, or first frost, in your area comes around September 21 to 25, then alfalfa shouldn't be cut after August 15. "That puts you starting harvest operations in the first part of August, or right now," says Wentz. "Even if now seems early, and you might like more growth, completing your cut now is fair to the plant. As well, you'll save down the road, because you won't lose plants to winter kill."

Wentz also advises farmers to watch cattle grazing on an alfalfa-mix pasture. "If the growth is more lush than usual, you could have bloat problems," he says.

Contact: *Don Wentz*
381-5862

Production, environmental gain from range management

SEP - 1 1992

Whether woodland range in the northeast or short grass prairie in the southeast, both livestock producers and the environment gain by range management says an Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife range manager.

"Management is critical to strike a balance between the range resource and forage needs to produce red meat," says Barry Adams, regional range manager in Lethbridge. "And, it must also be remembered rangeland is native plant communities, and it requires a different set of management practices and principles than crop land."

One of the most common problems, he says, is reliance on season long continuous grazing where cattle are allowed to graze too much and too often on favored plants and in favored pasture areas. "The carrying capacity of many Crown grazing leases can often be improved or made more reliable through the application of some very basic management," Adams says.

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Alberta AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Stimulating and encouraging plant succession is the basic goal of native range management, and there are four keys to success. First, is to balance livestock forage demand with what the pasture resource can supply and leave adequate residue or carryover to protect plants and soil. Second, is striving for uniform grazing. This can be achieved through what Adams describes as "livestock distribution tools" such as salting, watering sites and fence layout. Third, seeded pastures, seeded annuals or rotation can be used to minimize the negative effects of early grazing. Finally, rangeland needs periods of rest and recovery after grazing.

"A planned grazing system with these measures will help you achieve resource and production goals," says Adams. "By following these principles you'll benefit with a higher sustainable carrying capacity—more beef per acre over the long term."

To some people, these management practices seem to have an archaic ring he adds. "But, when their effects are viewed over a period of years with a monitoring program sensitive to plant species and vigor shifts, their true value becomes clear."

"Critics of rotational grazing often fail to look at the total landscape and the environmental costs of continuous grazing," Adams says. While better range management improves livestock production, there are other benefits.

Extra grazing is available in areas not previously used. There are conservation benefits from extra grass carryover that conserves moisture and makes production more stable during dry spells. Another significant environmental spinoff is rejuvenation and protection of riparian areas. Riparian areas are the lushly vegetated areas around drainages, creeks and wetlands where trees, shrubs and tall dense ground cover provide benefits to wildlife and livestock.

Contact: *Barry Adams*
381-5486

Now cautious optimism for fall feeder prices

Recent trends in slaughter cattle and feedgrain markets gives some cautious optimism for fall feeder cattle prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The shift in my fall price projections is subtle—from subdued pessimism to cautious optimism," says Ron Gietz. "Instead of forecasting slightly lower feeder cattle prices compared to 1991, I now feel fall prices are more likely to be equal to or slightly above year-ago levels."

Gietz gives four reasons for his adjusted forecast. Higher slaughter cattle prices tops the list. "Even the most pessimistic outlook for the fall fed cattle market calls for prices well above last year's disastrously low levels," he says. "The positive impact from improved fed cattle price expectations outweighs the potential negative impact from increased supplies."

Momentum is another factor. Feeder cattle prices have posted steady, but very gradual gains though 1992. "Because price increases have been gradual, a sharp correction to the downside—as happened in 1991—is less likely," he says. Price movements are likely to continue to be gradual rather than sudden, he adds, and are expected to follow typical seasonal patterns.

Costs of gain, should be similar to 1991 costs he notes. While barley futures trading implies fall and winter feedgrain prices will be about $10 per tonne higher than in 1991, that is offset by reduced interest costs compared to the fall of 1991.

Gietz also notes the supply of feeder cattle in Alberta should be slightly greater than last year, with low volumes of feeder cattle exports and continuing herd expansion.

Feeder cattle prices were strong in July. In addition, feeder cattle futures contracts rallied with August and September contracts trading above the $80/cwt. level. The biggest factor in that continued strength was the strong performance of the fed cattle market.

Contact: *Ron Gietz*
427-5376

Long term U.S. trends influence on Canadian hog production

Important long term trends in U.S. pork production could influence Canadian operations in coming years says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Increased productivity, geographic and structural shifts, as well as seasonal production shifts in the U.S. have implications for all hog producers says Ron Gietz. "In general, hog production is becoming a more seasonal, less cyclical and lower margin business. Operations not achieving above-average production efficiencies, or that don't benefit from economies of scale are likely to experience increasing financial pressure in coming years."

Gietz says the influencing trends are evident in the latest quarterly U.S. Hog Inventory Report. Increasing productivity can be seen as improvements in American slaughter hog operations are beginning to have a significant impact on U.S. pork production. The number of pigs weaned per litter in the U.S. in 1992 moved to an industry average of over eight.

"Because of an increase in pigs per litter, U.S. pork output will expand at an annual rate of one to two per cent, even if breeding herd inventories remain constant," he notes.

Iowa remains the centre of the North American hog industry, and appears to be becoming even more dominant. "Hog populations in that state have been growing at a faster rate than for the U.S. as a whole," says Gietz. That growth can partly be explained by excess slaughter capacity and premium prices in the Iowa market.

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In other traditional hog-producing states—including Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Nebraska and Missouri—breeding stock inventories have been declining or increasing very slowly during the current expansion phase in the U.S. "So, these states are decreasing in importance in the industry," he says.

Another trend is growth of the industry in a group of non-traditional hog states. North Carolina is one example, where breeding stock inventories went up 24 per cent between June 1, 1991 and June 1, 1992. "However, this expansion is typically occurring in some form of vertical integration, and conventional hog cycle economics don't apply to the vertically integrated sector," Gietz says.

New production patterns in the U.S. are also affecting seasonal price patterns. Analysis from Iowa State University shows U.S. hog production is shifting to the second half of the year. Fourth quarter slaughter has increased the greatest amount, while second quarter slaughter has shown the largest decline. This seasonal shift may relate to increased use of confinement continuous-production systems. In the U.S., these systems tend to produce more August through November slaughter, and less May and June slaughter.

"Even five years ago, August was considered the annual price peak," says Gietz. "But August slaughter hog prices now average below May, June and July prices. The drop in late fall prices is becoming more pronounced because of the increased output then. As well, there is no longer a statistical basis for forecasting price dips during March and April."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Oilseed markets weak

Currently oilseed markets are both technically and fundamentally weak says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Oilseed markets declined in July, and the near term outlook for prices isn't encouraging," says Al Dooley.

Canola futures went down by more than $15 per tonne (basis the September contract) during July. August soybean futures declined by more than 50 cents per bushel, as an excellent U.S. soybean yield is predicted.

Dooley also notes August is a key month for soybeans and the next few weeks will be important to yield potential. "Conditions suggest that record breaking yields are a definite possibility, so the short term price outlook is negative. Barring a change in the next few weeks, prices could remain under pressure well into the fall."

However, supplies at the world and U.S. level are expected to be in line with usage. "This suggests, over the longer term, prices will have to rise to ration supplies smoothly over the crop year and encourage new seeding in the southern hemisphere," he says.

The declining and already weak oilseed market offers relatively little in the way of marketing alternatives Dooley adds. "If your outlook is for a continuing drop in prices, pricing some new crop may be a good strategy. If you feel that upside potential is greater than downside risk, you may want to wait this weak market out."

"Good pricing opportunities did turn up in late spring, and hopefully producers did price a portion of their expected production then," he adds.

Statistics Canada estimates Canadian canola area at 7.7 million acres, virtually unchanged from 1991's 7.8 million acres. Canadian canola production in 1992-93 is estimated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) at 4.10 million tonnes compared to 4.15 million in 1991-92.

Contact: Al Dooley
427-5387

Ripen green tomatoes in the sun

Harvesting garden vegetables can sometimes be a race with the weather, but there are ways to ripen vegetables that have to picked early says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Vine-ripened tomatoes are a goal, but sometimes you have to pick them while they're still green," says Pam North, of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

Tomatoes will ripen indoors, and North recommends putting them in a sunny windowsill to ripen. "Some people wrap tomatoes in paper and store them, but a sun ripened tomato will have 50 per cent more vitamin C than one ripened in the dark."

Gardeners can encourage vine ripening by pruning new flowers on tomato plants and topping staking varieties after the first week of August she adds. "This allows the plant to put more energy into ripening its existing fruit."

Pruning vines to prevent flowering will also encourage winter squash and pumpkins to ripen. Squash are mature when a thumbnail can't break the skin of the vegetable.

To promote onion maturation, North suggests withholding water after August 15. Also lift onions slightly with a garden fork to break feeder roots. "Onions are ready to harvest when their tops fall over naturally," she says. "Breaking over the tops isn't recommended because the onion won't mature properly, or store as well."

After harvesting, onions need to be cured at a warm temperature (26 to 30°C) for a week to 10 days. Tops will dry and skins will get papery allowing for better storage. Onions should be stored at zero to three degrees Celsius.

For more information about harvesting, ripening or storing vegetables, contact the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton at 422-1789, or the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks at 362-3391.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Vegetable storage may need compromises

Storing your garden harvest make take some compromises if you keep a variety of vegetables together says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"When it comes to storage, vegetables can be stored for extended periods if adequate temperature, humidity and airflow are maintained," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

But, Barkley says, some compromises might be needed if there is a limited storage area for a number of different vegetables. She notes vegetables requiring high humidity, such as carrots and potatoes, will rapidly lose crispness and become unpalatable if they are stored in too dry an area. On the flip side, vegetables that require low humidity can be kept in a high humidity areas, but they will eventually rot or mold.

"Temperatures can vary from the recommendations. At higher temperatures, longevity and quality are reduced, but the variation can allow for storage compromises," she says.

For example, potatoes stored at below four degrees Celsius develop an unpleasant sweet taste. However, they lose this taste if they are allowed to warm-up for a few days before they are used. So, potatoes can be successful stored with cabbage, carrots and beets at a lower temperature.

Before starting to store vegetables in a root cellar or cold room, the home gardener should check out the limits of their storage area she says. "To avoid disappointment, you need to consider the limitations of your storage area before deciding what goes into it. If it's fairly well insulated, has adequate air exchange and tends to remain cool and moist, it's suitable for storing potatoes and other root vegetables.

"If the area is warmer and drier, or poorly insulated, it might be used for squash and pumpkins. If your storage facility has poor ventilation or widely fluctuating temperatures, it shouldn't be used for vegetables that require high levels of humidity."

Vegetables that should be stored in cold (zero to one degree Celsius) and humid (95 to 100 per cent) conditions include beets, cabbage, carrots, parsnips, radishes and rutabagas. In these conditions, dependent on type, these vegetables will keep well for between two and six months.

Potatoes should also be stored in high humidity, between 90 and 95 per cent, but in cool rather than cold temperatures—between five and seven degrees Celsius for table potatoes. Seed potatoes should be kept slightly cooler. Both types will keep for between five and 10 months.

Squash, marrows and pumpkins require cool and dry storage conditions at 10 to 12°C and between 70 and 75 per cent humidity. They can be kept for up to six months.

Heat cured onions should be kept at a cooler temperature—between zero and three degrees Celsius—and at a dry 70 to 75 per cent humidity.

Contact: Shelley Barkley
362-3391

Agri-News briefs

Tight supplies likely to keep local feedgrain prices firm

Tight supplies will likely keep local cash markets for feedgrains relatively firm until harvest begins says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Expectations of a very large corn harvest in the U.S. have probably been fully factored into the market by now, and further large declines are unlikely," says Jo Ann Sandhu. "Even with marginal declines in futures prices, local basis levels will likely have to narrow in order to attract producer deliveries." Improved growing conditions in the mid-western U.S. since the first week of July did push feedgrain prices sharply lower. There are rising trade expectations that the U.S. corn crop will be more than 216 million tonnes, one and half million tonnes more than is currently projected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Weaker dollar helps hog prices

Although U.S. slaughter hog prices could drop to 1991 levels or lower this fall, Canadian prices may range slightly above year-ago levels in late 1992 and early 1993 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The projection of a slightly stronger performance in Canadian markets is due to expectations for a weaker dollar compared to the same period in 1991," says Ron Gietz. "If the Canadian dollar appreciates in value, slaughter hog prices could drop below 1991 levels this fall," he adds. Gietz expects average Alberta producer payment prices for Index 100 hogs at $1.15/kg (dressed)

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through September and October, dropping to $1.10 in November and $1.05 for December. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Lentil, bean acreage at record levels

Alberta farmers have seeded record levels of dry bean acreage this year, an estimated 28,000 acres. "Some feel that the Statistics Canada estimate understates bean area in the province by a couple of thousand acres," says Al Dooley, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Relative to the U.S. however, Alberta is a small player in the edible bean market he adds. However, current projections are for a two to four cent per pound improvement on average over prices in 1991-92. Lentil acreage has set a new Canadian record this year, up sixteen per cent from 1991 to 685,000 acres. "This large acreage suggests another year of relatively weak prices," says Dooley. "However, there is the wild card of the weather. So far, cool and wet weather in many areas has been far from ideal for lentils, but if a more normal drying pattern returns, yields could be excellent." For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Olde tyme sheep fair and dog trials combine

The Olde Tyme Sheep Fair and Canadian Classic Sheep Dog Trails will be combined this year. The joint event runs September 19 and 20 at Pasu Farms near Carstairs. Besides the open dog trial, there will be a number of activities associated with the fair. This includes the Canadian National Lamb Carcass competition; shearing, spinning, dyeing and weaving demonstrations; fashion shows; taste testing and lamb cutting demonstrations; and, a four level shepherd's competition. For more information, call Barry at 337-2800.

Room for final wheat payment

There is still room for a reasonable final payment for the 1991-92 wheat crop says an Alberta Agriculture market economist. "My expectation is based on the average level of the Canadian Wheat Board asking prices and U.S. cash prices to date," says Gisele Magnusson. Initial payments for the 1992-93 crop year were announced in late July. The initial payment for #1 CWRS wheat is $112 per tonne, in-store Vancouver or Thunder Bay. "This price is three dollars above the accumulated initial plus adjustments for #1 CWRS wheat in the 1991-92 crop year," she notes. For more information, contact Magnusson in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Cubed hay shipments to Japan increasing

Canadian cubed hay shipments to Japan increased 23 per cent during the first five months of 1992 compared the same period last year. Canadian shipments into Japan totalled almost 87,000 tonnes between January and May, versus 70,000 tonnes the previous year. Growth in compressed hay shipments to Japan has also been impressive says Al Dooley, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Over the same five month period, Canadian shipments totalled about 19,000 tones compared to 11,000 in 1991. Most of the product is timothy hay. Canadian product, however, still accounts for less than five per cent of the total volumes imported to Japan. Dooley also notes cube prices are expected to strengthen through the fall and winter. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

August 17, 1992

Hit the target, plan to market

Many farmers are now realizing marketing is more than selling, and that they should plan to market says an Alberta Agriculture regional marketing specialist.

"Saying a marketing plan is a plan to market sounds oversimplified, but that's the gist of what you want to do—plan what you do, have a system instead of wandering through markets by chance," says Doug Cornell who is based in Airdrie.

Cornell suggests considering five points in developing a marketing plan, starting with setting goals. "Your overall goal is, of course, to be as profitable as possible, but you need to be more specific. You'll have to set goals or objectives such as marketing within the top third of prices, meeting a specific rate of return, reducing the risk of price change before delivery, pricing above your production costs, or meeting cash flow needs without 'fire fighting'. Most people will probably have a combination of goals that include some of those objectives."

Second is integrating your production and financial plans by figuring out what, when and how much of your product you have to sell. "This may be a case of when will your backgrounder cattle be ready for market, or which market you want them ready for and making adjustments to your production plans. Grain farmers may plan to pre-price 20 or 30 per cent of their crop before harvest if prices meet their target," Cornell says.

Farmers also have to estimate their production costs when making a marketing plan. "This must be based on your costs, not someone else's," he says. These production costs include calculating a survival price on break even cash costs in case of a poor market; an acceptable price that covers all costs; and, a favorable price determined by adding 10 or 15 per cent to your acceptable price.

"These calculations will give you an accurate picture of when prices are poor or good relative to your own production costs," Cornell adds.

Part of a marketing plan is projecting market prices, or analyzing the analysts. "Look at the outlooks market analysts and others are predicting. Combine this with your own market knowledge and make an informed price projection," advises Cornell.

Finally, comes making the market decision from putting together your own goals, outlooks and costs. This is the when, what, where and how to price and deliver. "Think of it as pulling the trigger. Pulling the trigger may be the hardest part, but with a solid plan, you can be more sure when to pull the trigger and that you're going to hit the target you want," he says.

Alberta Agriculture provides a number of tools to help farmers learn to market and to develop their own marketing plans. These include marketing modules, videos and market simulation exercises. For more information, contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or regional marketing specialist.

Contact: *Doug Cornell*
948-8536

SEP - 1 1992

Cool tone to July weather

July provided cool, dry conditions in central and northern Alberta, and cooler conditions with plenty of rain and some hail in southern Alberta says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

After a dry spring, the above normal rain in June, and again in

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

July, provided excellent, but cooler, growing conditions in southern Alberta says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

Almost the opposite was true in central and northern Alberta he adds. "Unfortunately, below normal rain in June coupled with below normal rain again in July, caused drought stress on crops in central and northern areas of the province. Parts of northeastern Alberta are also experiencing on-farm water supply shortages."

The below normal temperatures in July slowed crop development by as much as week, especially in southern Alberta he notes. In southern Alberta the July average temperatures were about three degrees Celsius below normal. "A July this cool is like having a month with only 24 average growing days instead of 31," he says. Central and northern areas reported temperatures one half to one degree below normal.

While cool temperatures affected crop development in July, hail in some areas in early August destroyed crops. Hardest hit were the Monarch and Coaldale areas around Lethbridge.

July rain totals varied from a low of 40.2 mm at Lac La Biche—38 per cent of normal—to a high of 169.7 mm at Pincher Creek—376 per cent of its normal. "Southwestern Alberta received the greatest July rainfall. Many locations reported 100 to 160 mm, which is double or triple their normal amount for the month," he says.

East central, north central and Peace regions received around 50 to 60 mm of rain, about 20 to 30 per cent below normal for the month of July. West central Alberta reported near normal precipitation, around 70 to 80 mm.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Fort Macleod teacher wins trip to national conference

The first night of the 1991 Summer Agricultural Education Institute Connie Dersch-Gunderson wrote a note to herself with the question—"How can I make all this relevant to grade one to three students?"

She solved that "how" successfully, and for her agricultural awareness efforts during the 1991-92 school year Dersch-Gunderson will be recognized along with teachers from each province at the National Agriculture in the Classroom conference this October in Edmonton. As part of their award as the oustanding agricultural awareness teacher in their province, they will attend the conference courtesy of Prairie Pools Inc. and the Agricultural Ambassador program.

As with other conferences, seminars and meetings she has attended, Dersch-Gunderson says she hopes to share ideas and talk with other teachers about how they can bring agriculture into their classrooms. In particular, she says, she looks forward to interaction with industry representatives. "There are so many different facets of agriculture, and so many materials available," she says.

Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program co-ordinator says that's exactly the purpose of the October 24 through 27 conference. "Our goal is better integration of agricultural topics into the curricula. Issue panels, case studies, workshops and round table sessions are some of the ways to facilitate information sharing."

Dersch-Gunderson has been teaching primary grades at W.A. Day Elementary School in Fort Macleod for the last dozen years. She became the school's agricultural ambassador in 1990, the same year the Alberta Wheat Pool sponsored program was launched. The program's goal is placing an agricultural ambassador in every Alberta school.

When the ambassador program's bulletin came to her school, she volunteered immediately. "I thought, 'This is me.'," says Dersch-Gunderson, who was raised on an area ranch in the Porcupine Hills.

Last summer she participated in the second annual Summer Agricultural Education Institute. The institute is a full credit, fourth year university level course designed to help teachers bring agriculture into their classroom.

Positive awareness is an important goal for Dersch-Gunderson because most Albertans aren't as close to agriculture as they used to be. "They are more than once removed from the farm," she says. This accounts for an emphasis she's placed on getting her students to farms, or bringing hands-on agriculture to the school. For example, the school agriculture club she established visited a turkey farm, a mixed irrigation farming operation and the local auction market. A Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) volunteer brought a cow and her calf to the school, and a stock dog demonstration also came to the school yard.

Her students also participated in an agriculture school fair in neighbouring Claresholm and won prizes at the provincial ag ambassador fair in Medicine Hat. Dersch-Gunderson says she hopes to expand her activities in the next school year to a fair at her own school.

Dersch-Gunderson was nominated for recognition as the Alberta's agriculture awareness teacher by Nancy Newton, a mother of one of her students.

For more information on the national conference, contact Gabert in Edmonton at 427-2402, or Arnold Hansen, conference chair, in Viking at 336-2598.

Contact: Betty Gabert 427-2402
Connie Dersch-Gunderson 625-4688

Horse Improvement Program comes to Red Deer in September

A program that has been identifying superior Alberta horses for the last 18 years will return to Red Deer in September.

The Horse Improvement Program (HIP) is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch in co-operation with 13 participating breed associations. It will run two consecutive weekends in September, the 19 and 20 and the 26 and 27, at the Westerner grounds in Red Deer.

"Improving the quality of Alberta horses is one of the basic goals of the program," says Les Burwash of the horse industry branch. "It also serves to identify and advertise superior horses and breeders in the province. A final objective is in helping to establish markets for Alberta-bred horses."

The evaluation is unique and more complete than what happens in the show ring. Horses are judged against a breed standard rather than against other horses in the ring. Two experienced members of the horse industry and an equine veterinarian score each horse on their form—conformation—and their function—performance. "Equine veterinarians chosen as evaluators have extensive experience in observing unsoundness and conformation that leads to unsoundness," he says.

Five conformation categories include front limbs; hind limbs; head, neck, body and balance; athletic movement; and, type. The eight performance patterns test athletic ability, temperament and training potential. Burwash notes there is a major emphasis on athletic ability.

"Breeders are encouraged to participate in the program," says Burwash. "They will receive a written evaluation from each of the evaluators. Through this they can see the strengths and weaknesses of their animals and what could be corrected in a breeding program."

Burwash also notes awards are presented to six horses with the highest evaluations within each division in each breed. Up to $1,700 in prize money is available for classes with 10 or more entries.

The 1992 program features Arabians, Morgans and Saddlebreds on September 19; Sport horses, Welsh ponies and Tennessee Walking horses on September 20; Quarter horses and Pintos on September 26; and, Appaloosas and Paints on September 27. Alberta born and Alberta owned rules are in effect in the classes.

Pete Fraser of High River, Dr. Bob Mowrey of North Carolina and Dr. Wayne Burwash of Calgary will evaluate classes on the first weekend. On the second weekend Don Strain of South Dakota, Dr. Doug Householder of Texas and Okotoks veterinarian Dr. Warren Webber will handle the evaluations.

The deadline for entering the program is August 28. For application forms and other information, contact the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650, or in Edmonton at 427-8905.

Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

Bob Coleman
427-8905

4-H showcased at 75th anniversary main event

They came 4,000 strong, they celebrated and they went home with happy memories.

That's how Mahlon Weir describes Showcase'92 the official celebration of 4-H's 75th anniversary in Alberta held in Calgary on the August long weekend. "It was a highly successful event in terms of attendance and how people viewed their experience," says Weir of Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch and one of the Showcase'92 committee members.

The celebration represented two and one half years of planning by a provincial committee, thousands and thousands of volunteer hours and the festive attitude brought by the 4-H families and friends of 4-H who attended the event he says.

4-H projects were truly showcased at the three day event. More than 500 livestock project members plus another 250 members on the homemaking side took part in demonstrations and shows.

"The participation was really tremendous," says Henry Wiegman, provincial 4-H livestock specialist. "At one time we had about 220 horse club members, 180 beef club members, 50 sheep club members and 75 dairy club members all taking part in demonstrations or shows." There were also rabbit and poultry shows and a swine exhibit.

Approximately 250 sewing, foods, woodworking, photography, craft and garden projects made up a special bench show at Showcase'92 says Penny Wilkes, provincial 4-H home economics specialist. Members and leaders also could try out a series of mini workshops with topics such as nutritious snacks and Christmas craft ideas. An estimated 1,500 people also tried knowledge stations related to 4-H.

Fourteen of the top Alberta 4-H public speakers were at Showcase'92 to take part of the 1992 provincial 4-H public speaking finals. Clarence Wildeboer, an 18 year old Lacombe Dairy Club member, spoke his way to top spot with "Fortis et Liber". The competition's general topic was "Alberta legends".

The popularity of the scheduled fashion show, added a second show to the Showcase '92 agenda. The first part of the show featured historic fashions dating from the days of the North West Mounted Police at the turn of the century. Clothes were from the Kerby Museum of Fashion with volunteer senior citizen models from the Kerby Centre in Calgary. The second part of the fashion show put 4-H members in the spotlight. They modeled their own creations as well as clothing supplied by Lammle's Western Wear in Calgary.

Cont'd on page 4

The 75th anniversary commemorative history book was unveiled at Showcase'92. The 900-plus page book received 1060 submissions and contains nearly 1,200 photographs. Six gold editions of the book were later auctioned, and that auction netted $5,450 to help offset costs of 75th anniversary activities.

The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede purchased book number one for $1,200 and Shirley McClellan, associate agriculture minister, purchased the second book for $1,050. Other book buyers were: Judy Copithorne, Cochrane, book three, $1,000; Alberta Treasury Branches, book four, $725; Keith McKinnon, Carseland, book five, $600; and, Morris Tomlinson, Redwater, book 13, $875.

Book number six has been sent to the Canada 4-H Museum in Manitoba notes Weir.

About one thousand of the $45 history books were sold during Showcase'92. About 2,000 are still available. For more information, contact Lauretta Shuttleworth at Box 27, Rolling Hills, Alberta, T0J 2S0, or call her at

964-2360. (Books are $45 plus $8 for postage and handling. Cheques can be made out to Alberta 4-H 75th Anniversary Committee.)

McClellan, whose duties include responsibility for 4-H, was a special guest and speaker at official ceremonies recognizing the 75th anniversary. She noted as a former 4-H parent she was proud to participate in 75th anniversary activities, and she recognized the significant ongoing contribution of 4-H in rural Alberta.

Contact: Mahlon Weir
422-4444

CDC Dairy Club performs well at provincial competition

A championship later than its usual date didn't detract from the provincial 4-H dairy show as 75 4-Hers participated in the 46th annual show.

"This year's show was part Showcase'92, the major celebration of Alberta's 75 years of 4-H, during the August long weekend," notes Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H livestock specialist. "The provincial dairy show usually runs in mid July."

The CDC Club, named for its area including Crossfield, Didsbury and Carstairs, went home with two club awards and a number of individual members were also award winners.

The CDC Club won both the club herdsmanship award and the club herd class. The Cherhill Club had won the herdsmanship award for the last three years.

Robert Klys and Lexi Wright, both CDC members, showed the supreme and reserve grand champions at the show; Klys with the champion from the calf class and Wright with the summer yearling champion. Six class winners—both champion and reserve—earn the right to be in the supreme championship class. The classes include intermediate calf, calf, summer yearling, junior yearling, winter yearling and yearling.

Wright was also a multiwinner in the judging competition for the third consecutive year. In 1992 she repeated as top senior individual judge. She was also a member of the high overall club judging team with Ella Wright and Laura Jeffery and high show ring team with Alice Schiller of the Sturgeon Valley Club.

Other judging winners were Tracey Pollack of the CDC club in the junior individual class; Julene Copithorne of the Mountainview Club in the intermediate individual category and high overall individual; and, Ella Wright for high overall individual reasons.

Len Congdon of the Bashaw Club was the top overall individual in the clipping competition as well as the high senior. Mountainview Club members Gordie Copithorne and Lynsey Chalack were the junior and intermediate winners.

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

Provincial 4-H sheep show returns

After a one year absence, the provincial 4-H sheep showcase made a come back at Showcase '92, the official celebration of the 4-H movement's 75th anniversary in Alberta.

About 50 4-H members participated in the show that included showmanship, trimming and conformation classes says Henry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H livestock specialist.

Laureen Hall of the Rosebud Sheep Club from the Olds area showed the grand champion ewe lamb with Rolanda Ostrom of the Okotoks Foothills Sheep Club taking reserve honors.

The mature ewe with lambs grand championship went to another Foothills 4-H Sheep Club member, Zane Ashbacher. Reserve champion was shown by Aaron Grant of the Berrywater Beef and Sheep Club based in the County of Vulcan.

On the wool side, Zane's brother, Kelly Ashbacher, showed the grand champion wool ewe lamb. Sherean Young of the Crowfoot Beef and Sheep Club based in the Strathmore area was the reserve champion. Young also took reserve honors in the mature ewe class to sister Tina with the grand champion.

Tina Young was also a winner in the intermediate showmanship class. Showmanship classes were broken into three age categories. Junior winner was Todd Koosey of the Irricana Beef and Multi Club in the 10 to 12 year old age group.

Rolanda Ostrom was a repeat winner in the both the senior (16 to 21 year old) showmanship and trimming classes.

Trimming classes also featured repeat winners with Kelly Ashbacher the winner in the junior class and Laureen Hall the intermediate class winner.

For more information, contact Wiegman in Edmonton at 427-2541.

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

4-Hers speak out at provincial finals

The best of Alberta 4-H's public speakers showcased their talents at recent 75th anniversary celebrations in Calgary.

Usually held in the spring, the provincial 4-H public speaking finals were moved to later in the year and held in conjunction with Showcase'92, the official anniversary event. The timing switch also drew a record audience.

"More than 450 people took in the public speaking finals," says Arron Madson, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H personal development specialist.

Clarence Wildeboer, 18, of Lacombe emerged as the competition's winner. He, like the other 14 finalists, had a week to prepare a four to six minute speech based on the general topic of "Alberta legends." His speech, titled "Fortis et Libre" for the provincial motto of "strong and free, focused on the opportunities available in the province.

Shorter impromptu speeches rounded out the competition. Wildeboer's was on the subject of "good leadership is essential".

The Lacombe Dairy Club member is the second member of his family to capture the provincial speaking title. His older brother Hendrik won the title in 1990.

Second in this year's contest was Rebecca Lowther of Spirit River with third place going to Tracy Gardner of Olds.

Each speaker progresses through at least three levels—from club through region—of competition to reach the provincial finals.

Communication training has a special emphasis in the Alberta 4-H program notes Madson, with competitive public speaking as one of its elements.

The provincial event was sponsored by the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede youth speech and debate committee and Alberta Agriculture.

Contact: Arron Madson
422-4444

Phone. (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

August 24, 1992

Popularity of straight combining oats grows

Straight combining oats is becoming a more common practice, and that trend will likely continue says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Many of the farmers who straight combine say modern weed control is a basic reason they don't need to swath," says Murray McLelland of the field crop development centre in Lacombe. Harvesting by straight combining works particularly well when the farmer has a grain drier and aeration bins he adds.

"And there are a lot of advantages to straight combining, starting with economics. You eliminate the time and expense of swathing," he says. Swathing costs farmers about four to five dollars per acre. "As well, straight combining puts more bushels in the bin because you prevent swathing and pick-up grain losses," he adds.

A standing oat crop will also dry faster after a rain with less kernel staining than a swathed crop. This means higher quality and lower losses for the farmer.

Straight combining also has conservation benefits. "When straight combining you can leave a higher stubble, this decreases the amount of straw your combine must handle, and the higher stubble is a better snow trap.

"This snow trap is particularly beneficial if your oat crop is underseeded, because additional snow increases winter protection and spring moisture," he says.

McLelland notes the few oats that may drop off prior to straight combining are usually small sized. "So this can be looked on as a sizing operation." As well, when straight combining the farmer can drive around green spots in low lying areas.

"Some farmers also say if the oat crop is left standing longer, before combiningand without swathing, then wild oats will mature and drop to the ground and so improve the crop quality," he says.

Just as there are benefits, so are there some disadvantages McLelland adds. "You increase the frost risk by waiting to straight combine and the risk of shattering loss. It's also more critical to obtain an even germination and maturity for straight-combining compared to swathing and combining." He also notes increased snow trap from a taller stubble may delay spring land work.

Contact: *Murray McLelland*
782-4641

SEP 1 4

Hear harvest weather forecasts on Weather line, Weatheradio

Most Alberta farmers have a couple choices for specialized farm weather forecasts as they contend with the weather during harvest.

"Farmers can telephone one of seven regional farm weather lines, or in five communities have the option of listening to Weatheradio Canada," says Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist for Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch.

In its eighth season of operation, the Alberta Farm Weather Line is a co-operative service provided by Alberta Agriculture and

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service. The regional lines bring farmers up-to-date agricultural weather forecasts.

Over 200,000 calls have already been made to the service during the first seven months of 1992 notes Dzikowski. "The continuous, year-round access to agricultural weather forecasts assists producers in making farming decisions."

Forecasts specific to each region are updated four times daily at 5:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Farmers can call the weather line in their region. Long distance charges do apply. The telephone numbers are: Grande Prairie, 539-7654; Edmonton, 468-9196; Red Deer, 342-7322; Calgary, 295-1003; Lethbridge, 328-RAIN (7246); Medicine Hat, 526-6224; and, Coronation, 57-TEMPS (578-3677). (**Editor's note: See attached map.**)

"The popularity of the lines sometimes means farmers have trouble connecting with it, and get a busy signal. Farmers who live within 50 km of Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary and Lethbridge have the option of listening to Weatheradio Canada," he says.

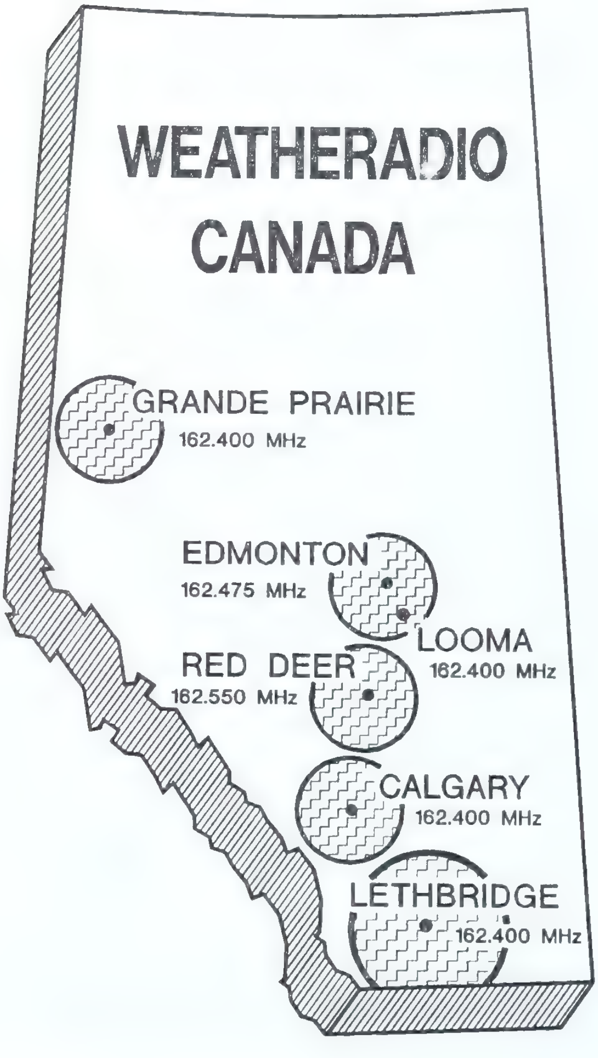
Weatheradio Canada is a dedicated VHF-FM radio broadcast system transmitted on a frequency of 162.4, 162.475 or 162.55 megahertz (MHz). The Environment Canada service provides continuous, up-to-date weather forecast information and weather warnings directly from its weather office.

A special weatheradio receiver is needed to receive the broadcast. Receivers costs around $60. A receiver with a warning alert feature and battery back-up power source are also recommended. So is a switch, rather than a dial, for selecting broadcast frequency.

Dzikowski notes Weatheradio Canada can be heard within about 50 to 60 km from the broadcast site. (**Editor's note: See attached map.**) Since transmissions operate by line of sight, reception may be poor in low-lying areas such as river valleys. "Check to see if the receiver works in your location before you buy one," he advises.

For more information about the Farm Weather Line or Weatheradio Canada, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385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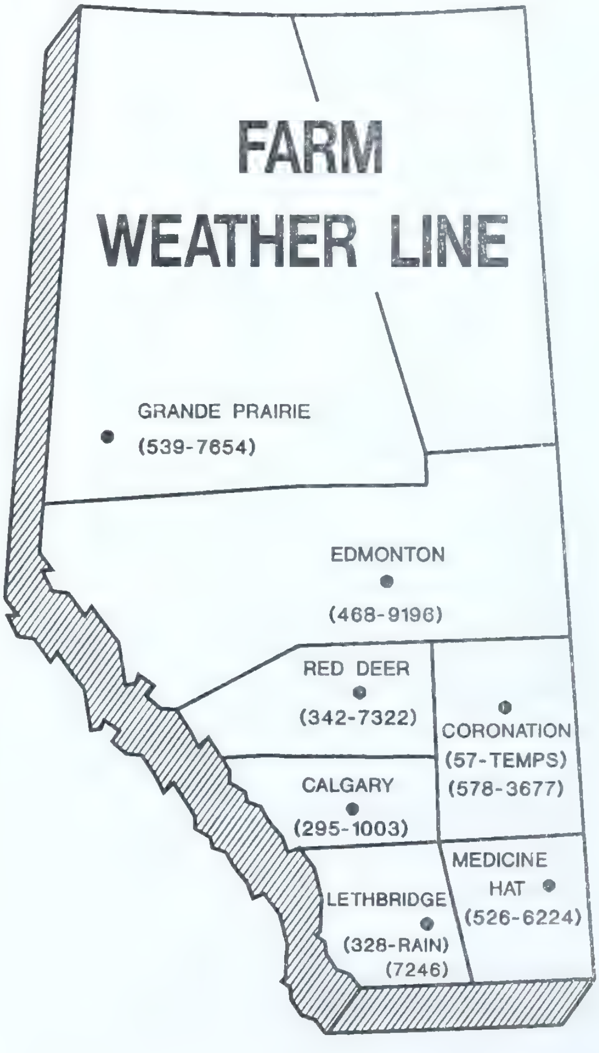
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CALGARY
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MEDICINE
HAT
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LETHBRIDGE
(328-RAIN)
(7246)

Alberta Education endorses Ag in the Classroom

Alberta Education has joined the list of major sponsors for the national Agriculture in the Classroom conference scheduled for Edmonton in October.

As well, the provincial education department will officially endorse the provincial Ag in the Classroom program during the national conference says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program co-ordinator.

Since its Alberta inception in 1984, Ag in the Classroom has provided direct support to teachers through curriculum resources and materials, as well as professional development opportunities. In particular the Agricultural Ambassador Program, launched in 1990, has served as a link between the industry and schools, and network to distribute classroom materials and information.

"Alberta Education is pleased to support the Agriculture in the Classroom Program," says Roger Palmer, assistant deputy minister of student programs and evaluation for Alberta Education. "It's an important partnership which can help our young people learn more about the role of agriculture in our economy and our daily lives."

The official announcement will be made during award ceremonies when agricultural teacher recognition awards are presented to outstanding teachers from across Canada.

The fourth biennial conference, October 24 through 27, has already attracted a number of major sponsors including the Prairie Pools Inc., the Royal Bank, Alberta Wheat Pool, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Agricultural Ambassador Program, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and Alberta Agriculture.

Gabert says the conference has been designed to maximize sharing between teachers and the agriculture industry. "One of our first sessions will be a cross-Canada check-up of the best ideas for integrating agriculture into classrooms during the past year. There will also be issues panels, case studies and a wide variety of select-a-session topics."

Early bird registration has attracted participants from across Canada and the United States she notes.

The opening keynote address will come from Brian Little, the manager of agricultural training for the Royal Bank. The conference closes with John Paterson well-known psychologist and associate dean of education at the University of Alberta.

Contact: *Betty Gabert*
427-2402

Pam Shipstone
Alberta Education
427-2984

Farm safety contest winners get awards August 26

Four hundred and fifty rural school children from across Alberta will receive awards for winning entries in a farm safety contest on August 26.

Contest winners and their families have been invited to 21 local John Deere dealerships for the award presentations. John Deere co-sponsored the Alberta Agriculture farm safety awareness campaign. An Alberta Agriculture representative will also be on hand for the presentations.

The awareness contest invited elementary school children to draw a picture or write a story telling how they'd keep "Farm Accident", a fictional character in the campaign, from visiting their farm..

"We had a tremendous response for how short the campaign period ran," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program manager. The "Don't turn your back on *Farm Accident*" campaign was launched in Blackfalds in late March, and students had until May 15 to get in their entries. More than 1,500 entries were received by the farm safety program.

This campaign was the second consecutive involving Alberta Agriculture and John Deere. Response to both awareness efforts has been excellent says Kyeremanteng. "We can see a real partnership developing in farm safety awareness between co-operating teachers and their students, the students taking the message home to their parents, and between Alberta Agriculture and its corporate sponsor. There's also that important local link of the dealers in Alberta communities.

"The presentation time, just as harvest begins, also reminds farm families to take care during one of the particularly hazardous times of the year on the farm calendar," he adds.

Five prize categories were in the contest. John Deere supplied most of the prizes for the campaign's contest: 25 first place radio control tractors; 25 second place farm sets; and, 50 third place front end loaders. Fourth prize "Farm Accident" fanny packs were given to 100 students, and 250 "Farm Accident" T-Shirts were given for fifth place.

One of those 250 T-shirts will go to a young American student in Wisconsin, who entered the contest through a family connection in Alberta.

Presentations will be made at the dealerships in the following locations: Olds, Trochu, Westlock, Brooks, Burdett, Calgary, Edmonton, Provost, Coronation, Drumheller, Spirit River, Fahler, Athabasca, Foremost, Grande Prairie, Manning, High River, Barrhead, Hanna, Fort Saskatchewan and Vegreville.

Contact: *Solomon Kyeremanteng*
427-2186
Wendy Fountain
John Deere
(416)945-7345

10th annual Equi-Fair comes to Spruce Meadows

An international celebration of the horse, Equi-Fair, comes to Spruce Meadows for the 10th year this September 9 though 13.

Equi-Fair is an interal part of the world renowned Masters show jumping tournament held annually at Spruce Meadows. When it started in 1983, Equi-Fair attracted 60 companies, many European, to show their wares to a North American audience.

In 1992, 200 companies and service organizations from 11 countries, as well as 17 Alberta horse breed associations, will be on hand to showcase the latest in equine technology. The fair is designed for horse lovers and horse enthusiasts and features everything from riding fashion and art, to stable products and tack.

Alberta Agriculture is particularly involved with "Alberta Breeds for the World", a component added to Equi-Fair in 1984 says Les Burwash of the department's horse industry branch. "This is a showcase of Alberta's best horses and has attracted a lot of interest from horse enthusiasts as well as the general public taking in the other activities at Spruce Meadows," he says.

Another popular associated event is the Battle of the Breeds challenge, a series of competitions to determine breed supremacy. "Battle of the Breeds is fun, both for the horse industry people involved, as well as the spectators. Since the competition started in 1990, it's quickly become a crowd favorite," says Burwash.

Team Arabian will look to defend its title as the most versatile of the breeds against last year's runners up Team Appaloosa, the 1990 winners Team Paint and crowd favorite heavy horses Team Percheron and Team Belgian. A total of $33,000 in prize money will be awarded for the nine events ranging from barrel racing to trail driving.

In addition to the exhibits and competition, horsemanship clinics and a veterinary seminar will be held. Clinic topics include: what to expect from riding lessons; selecting and fitting tack; and, loading and trailering horses.

This year marks the fifth year of the veterinary seminar. Harold Hintz, a recognized North American specialist in equine nutrition, will be featured. Hintz is from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York and will speak to veterinarians on the Thursday and Friday of the fair.

Equi-Fair opens daily at 11 p.m. for its first three days and at 10 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. It runs until 6 p.m. except for Friday and Saturday. Friday the fair is open until 10 p.m. and on Saturday until 7 p.m.

"The five days are just a great family event, whether or not you have any previous experience with horses and the horse industry," says Burwash. "Besides all the Equi-Fair activities, the Masters show jumping tournament really shouldn't be missed as it features some of the world's best right here in Alberta. Plus the 'festival of nations' provides visitors with international food and entertainment."

Spruce Meadows is located one kilometre south of Calgary city limits on Highway 2 and two kilometres west on Highway 22X.

For more information about Alberta Breeds for the World, contact the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650, or in Edmonton at 427-6361. For further information on Equi-Fair and the Masters, contact Sheryl Dalik at Spruce Meadows at 254-3200 or FAX 254-3209.

Contact:	*Les Burwash* *297-6650*	*Bob Coleman* *427-6361*
	Sheryl Dalik *254-3200*	

Scholarship program grows by two

Alberta's 4-H scholarship program has new two additions for its line-up for the next academic year.

"The two new scholarships will be awarded this fall," says Arron Madson, Alberta Agriculture's 4-H personal development specialist.

The scholarships are the Alberta Farm and Ranch Writers Award and the George Pimm Memorial Scholarship. They boost the total number of scholarships available to 88. These scholarships provide nearly $59,000 to post secondary education students.

The Alberta Farm and Ranch Writers Award was established by the **Alberta Farm and Ranch Magazine**. Scholarship recipients will be required to show their written skills to earn the $500 scholarship. Applicants will be judged on a "unique" written component, their communication skills, community involvement and academic standing. Recipients must also have been a 4-H member in Alberta for three years. The scholarship is for students in their second year of study.

A strong supporter of 4-H in the Peace River region is recognized in the George Pimm Memorial Scholarship. Applicants must have been a 4-H member for at least three years to qualify for the scholarship, and hail from the Mackenzie (Peace River) district or the Peace region. Leadership skills and 4-H achievement are the scholarship basis. The award will be worth $300 in 1992.

For more information on the Alberta 4-H Scholarship Program, contact an Alberta Agriculture district office, the nearest 4-H regional office, or the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 422-4444.

Contact:	*Elaine Hawrelak* *422-4444*	*Arron Madson* *422-4444*

Agri-News briefs

4-Hers off to two part leadership seminar

Three Alberta 4-H members have embarked on a two-phase journey to become better leaders at the Blue Lake Youth Leadership seminar. The seminar begins this week (August 23 through 28). Cindy Kozak of Vilna, Chad McLeod of Olds and Erin Mitchell of Pincher Creek will return to Blue Lake in October to complete the seminar. The seminar is hosted by Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation and is designed to increase leadership effectiveness. "The program's emphasis is centered on the premise that each individual has unique leadership abilities, and that by developing a greater insight into your own personal strengths and areas of potential development, you can become a more effective leader," says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist. Organizers hope participants use what they learn at the seminar with their respective youth associations. Leadership skills, action planning, communication skills and outdoor recreational pursuits are all part of the seminar. Blue Lake is located near Hinton. Participants were chosen to attend the seminar at the Provincial 4-H Selections program held in May. Trip awards are based on 4-H and community involvement as well as interpersonal skills. For more information, contact Stark in Airdrie at 948-8510, or Janice Taylor at 948-8514.

Trade liberalization supported

Trade liberalization was a topic that got time as Bill McKnight, Canada's federal agriculture minister, and Whitney MacMillan, chairman and chief executive officer of Cargill, spoke to a national convention of cattlemen. Both men were guest speakers at the 60th anniversary convention of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association held recently in Calgary. And both had almost the same message about challenges of succeeding in a global marketplace for their audience of 300. McKnight warned that the price of not adapting to change was being overcome by other counties that recognized and were ready to change. He also noted the beef industry has been successful acting in the face of change, rather than reacting to circumstances after the fact. Later in the day MacMillan, who was asked to address the topic of global trade in a changing world, echoed McKnight's sentiments. "Our future is increasingly dependent upon our ability to compete in a globalized, integrated marketplace. If we don't take the steps necessary to stay competitive, we'll be left behind. Others who are prepared to compete will step in." Both McKnight and MacMillan noted the potential of beef exports to the Pacific Rim. Commenting on a trade mission to that area McKnight said, "The beef industry is determined to create its own export opportunities." MacMillan noted beef consumption is increasing in key markets of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. All those markets have something else in common—little land area for further or more extensive animal production. "Imports—not local production—are the answer," he said. Imports of beef in the same four countries this year are projected to increase by 19 per cent over 1990 levels he added. McKnight also noted the successful conclusion to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) talks will be beneficial to cattle producers. While beef access is relatively free already, as affluence increases in Mexico, Mexicans are expected to eat more red meat. The higher profile of Mexico as an export destination since the trade talks began has been noticeable he adds. During the first quarter of 1992 the Canadian embassy in Mexico had more than 2,300 business visitors. This compares to 2,200 in all of 1991.

Beef research partnership announced

Research to reduce the amount of meat spoilage losses has been given a boost with support from a private company. Cargill has committed $75,000 over five years to developing innovative bacterial control systems to enhance product safety. The research project to improve storage life for chilled beef is also supported by the Alberta Cattle Commission and the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute. Announcement of Cargill's support was made at the recent Canadian Cattlemen's Association 60th anniversary convention in Calgary. The project announcement notes if the research is successful processors, distributors, retailers and consumers will be able to dramatically reduce meat spoilage losses. These losses are currently estimated at $200 million annually. Michael Stiles, a food microbiology professor at the University of Alberta, and Gordon Greer, an Agriculture Canada research scientist based in Lacombe, will conduct the study. For more information contact Greer in Lacombe at 782-3316, Bill Buckner with Cargill in High River at 652-8404, or Marjorie Mann with the Alberta Cattle Commission in Calgary at 275-4400.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

August 31, 1992

Drought stressed feed crops need nitrate test

If you're a producer who has put up feed from a drought stressed or otherwise damaged crop, you should test that feed before giving it to your livestock says an Alberta Agriculture ruminant nutritionist.

"You risk nitrate poisoning that can cause problems ranging from abortions to death in cattle," says Barry Yaremcio of the Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory in Edmonton. "And that risk is particularly high in areas where crops have been drought stressed in the Peace, northwest and northeast regions."

Crops accumulate a raw form of nitrogen from their roots in the stems and leaves. This nitrogen is needed for photosynthesis. However, in the case of drought stress when the plant doesn't have enough water and isn't growing fast enough to convert all the nitrate into protein, the nitrate collects in the plant. Nitrate accumulations can also occur if the plants are hail damaged enough so conversion can't take place.

"If your crop is injured or damaged, the best time to cut or harvest the crop is as soon as possible after the damage occurs," he says. "Nitrate levels will increase in the plant as long as it continues taking up more nitrate than it can convert to protein."

Yaremcio notes testing the feed can give farmers options. "Any feed with a nitrate level above one per cent should be used with extreme caution. But about 95 per cent of feeds with some nitrate can be salvaged for use by blending them down and mixing them with other feeds," he says.

The final level of nitrate in feed should be about one-half per cent nitrate. "Problems begin to occur in the area between the one per cent and one-half per cent level, and producers might see cattle cycling again in October or November after an early abortion or death of the fetus." Cattle are particularly vulnerable to nitrate poisoning he adds. "Cows have one of the lowest capabilities among domestic animals to handle high nitrate levels."

All suspect crops should be tested before being fed to livestock. If still in the field, Yaremico suggested farmers take five to 10 plant samples for nitrate testing. Low areas with the greenest and lushest growth should be included, as these areas as most likely to have the highest level of nitrates. To take a sample, plant stems should be cut approximately two inches above the ground. Whole plants can be taken to a private lab or Alberta Agriculture district offices to be sent to the Soils and Animal Nutrition Lab in Edmonton for nitrate analysis.

Because silaging and baling doesn't remove the nitrates, those feeds should be tested as well. "In particular, if hay is put up damp, the risk can become even greater," he says. When damp bales heat, the nitrates are converted to nitrites. These nitrites are 10 times more toxic than nitrates. They pass through the rumen wall into the blood stream more easily, so increase the chance of poisoning.

Yaremcio also reminds producers to test their own crops or feed. "Just because your neighbor's feed tested okay doesn't mean yours will. Different seeding dates, fertilizer application rates and rainfall amounts all influence the nitrate level. Check your own, and be sure."

"If you do have a sample with a high nitrate level, talk to your local district agriculturist, or call the nutrition lab in Edmonton," he adds. "We can give you suggestions about how to blend out these feeds and use them. If your feed is high in nitrates it will

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take you a little more work than usual to feed safely this winter."

A call to the Soils and Animal Nutrition Lab in Edmonton (427-6361) is toll-free through the Alberta government RITE network.

Cattle can graze on a drought stressed crop he adds. "Fresh forages, or a standing crop, take longer to breakdown in the rumen compared to dry forage, so they are slightly less of a concern. However, make sure animals are well fed before they graze on a damaged crop, and on the first day limit them to an hour or less on the crop. It takes five to seven days for animals to adjust to a feed that contains nitrate."

Contact: Barry Yaremcio
427-6361

Low slough levels could be dangerous for cattle

Drought conditions may have left dangerous levels of salts behind in sloughs says an Alberta Agriculture laboratory scientist.

Hot sun, combined with little or no rain, evaporates slough waters, leaving salts behind. That's left many sloughs with dangerous levels of dissolved solids, or salts.

"Cattle drinking from sloughs whose waters have almost all evaporated can result in illness and possibly death," warns Roy Smith, of the animal health laboratories branch.

Smith urges cattle producers in drought-stricken areas of the province to be on the lookout for this hazard and to watch their cattle. "There will normally be a lot of white sediment around the outside of the sloughs that could be dangerous for your cattle."

Vomiting, diarrhea, mucous in feces, abdominal pain and variety of nervous signs are all signals cattle may be ill from drinking bad water. "Because these symptoms can also be associated with a variety of other diseases, consult with your veterinarian," he advises.

An easy test can be done to see if a slough's water could cause cattle problems. Producers need a nine volt clock battery, two three inch lengths of bare copper wire and a glass of the slough water. Place one length of wire on each battery terminal. Hold them in place with your thumb. The two ends of the wire should be at least one inch apart. Lower the wires into the glass of water.

"If the slough water has a lot of dissolved solids, or salts, one wire will instantly be surrounded by a large number of bubbles. Such water can be dangerous," says Smith. Each of the bubbles will be distinctly visible. The bubbles will rise to the water's surface in under a second.

Excellent quality water, won't form bubbles he adds. "Water with a safe level of dissolved solids will produce tiny bubbles slowly. These bubbles will take several seconds to form and will slowly drift to the water's surface."

To practice the test, dissolve a teaspoon of table salt in cup of drinking water. "This simulates bad water, and you'll have an immediate reaction. A barely useable water can be simulated with a pinch of salt added to a cup of drinking water. You'll note the bubbles take several seconds to start forming," Smith says.

Water samples, from areas where there has been a livestock health problem or a health related production loss, can be analyzed at the department's toxicology laboratory. "Any other samples should be submitted to your local district agriculturist or a private laboratory," Smith advises.

A list of labs offering this service is available by calling the toxicology office in Edmonton (toll-free through the RITE system) at 427-2270.

Contact: Dr. Roy Smith
427-2270

Southern producers given tax deferral for herd sales

Cattle producers in six southern Alberta municipalities will be eligible for a one-year tax deferral if they sold part of their breeding herd because of drought conditions.

In a federal government announcement, the counties of Warner, Forty Mile and Lethbridge and the municipalities of Cypress, Cardston and Taber along with 44 rural municipalities in Saskatchewan were designated as eligible for the program. Eligible areas were determined by soil mositure and water supply conditions during the 1992 growing season.

The announcement also said other Prairie areas are being examined for drought conditions and may become eligible for the tax deferral. In 1991, 17 municipalities in eastern Alberta were designated as eligible for the program. Many of the same areas are also experiencing similar conditions in 1992 with lost forage and range, and lack of water. These areas are currently being assessed.

This deferral allows eligible producers to exclude part of their income from selling breeding stock from their taxable income. "The program's rationale is to provide producers with a way to replace their breeding stock in the future," says Paul Gervais of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

Originally announced in 1988, the Drought Induced Sales of Breeding Animals program has two deferrals. If producers reduce their herd by at least 15 per cent and less than 30 per cent, they can defer 30 per cent of their sale income. Producers are allowed a 90 per cent deferral if they are forced to sell 30 or more per cent of their breeding herd. However, if they buy new stock in the same year, that cost must be subtracted from their total sales.

Gervais says producers must request the deferral when they file their 1992 income tax return.

Contact: Paul Gervais
556-4250

Dave Kiely
PRFA, Regina
(306)780-6510

NISA extended to include other commodities

More producers are now eligible for benefits through the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) program.

Last week Alberta Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Bill McKnight, federal Minister of Agriculture, announced Alberta's program has been extended to include non-edible horticulture crops and fur ranching. This is effective for the 1991 tax year.

"The Alberta government supports the concept of NISA. As an income support program, it provides an effective farm management tool that does not influence price and production patterns for any commodity. The addition of these commodities allows us to build on the strengths of the program and work toward further expansion of NISA in Alberta," says Isley.

"The extension of NISA to additional commodities is another step toward more predictable, cost-shared programs that provide long-term income stability to farmers," says McKnight. "We will continue to work with the provinces and commodity organizations toward our goal of a whole farm program."

Producers can set aside funds during good years in their NISA account. Then, may draw from the account when their farming returns are low. Up to two per cent of eligible net sales can be deposited in an individual account. This is matched by a federal-provincial contribution.

Alberta will phase-in its contributions for these additional commodities over three years, and reach its one per cent maximum by the 1993 tax year. The federal government will contribute one per cent each year beginning with the 1991 tax year.

Federal and provincial governments will continue working with commodity organizations to extend NISA to additional commodities, including red meats and forages.

NISA applications are available by calling the toll-free NISA information line at 1-800-665-NISA (6472). September 31, 1992 is the application deadline for the 1991 tax year.

Contact: Ken Moholitny Don Russell, Nisa director
422-9167 (204)983-4821

Watch for new beef ads featuring gold medalist Tewksbury

Since Mark Tewksbury claimed Olympic gold for the 100 m backstroke at Barcelona, the race and his face have become very familiar to Canadians. The Canadian public will be seeing more of the Calgary swimmer as he continues his role speaking for beef.

Tewksbury, a spokesman for the Beef Information Centre the promotional arm of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, will be featured in a print and television advertising campaign due to hit newsstands and the airwaves the week of September 28.

The new television ads will run in major markets across Canada including Edmonton and Calgary. Print advertisements are slated for **Maclean's**, **Chatelaine**, **Television Guide** and **Reader's Digest**.

While Tewksbury will be telling the role beef played in his medal win and that he loves the taste, another Calgarian with an Olympic connection is also part of the commercial. Helen Bishop McDonald, who was the nutritionist for the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics, will present the facts about why beef is good for people, particularly as a source of iron.

Tewksbury himself encountered the need for iron says Carolyn McDonell, national co-ordinator for the Beef Information Centre "A few years ago he stopped eating red meats. He thought he'd be leaner and faster, but the opposite was true. He was tired and his results suffered."

Delegates at the recent Canadian Cattlemen's Association 60th annual convention in Calgary heard Tewksbury tell what he called his "beef story". His story chronicled the 24-year old swimmer's road to the gold, a road he couldn't have travelled without a change in his diet.

Altitude training was key to his Olympic success he says. When he first tried the innovative training at altitudes above 7,000 feet he got sick, and had one of his worst swimming performances. His problem was an iron deficiency because he'd stopped eating red meat.

Iron deficiency is the most common nutrient deficiency in Canada, and even more common in athletes. Dr. Marielle Ledoux, of the Sports Medicine Council, estimates one third of athletes have insufficient iron stores.

Iron is an essential component of hemoglobin, found in red blood cells, that carries oxygen throughout the body. Oxygen is used by the body's cells to release energy from the food we eat. Ledoux also noted attention has to be paid to the quality of iron in the diet, not just quantity. The body can more easily use high quality heme iron found in meat, than non-heme iron in vegetables, nuts and grains. Plus, meat increases the absorption of the iron found in other foods.

Altitude training increases the hemoglobin count, and for the training to be effective, an athlete needs a lot of iron stored in their system. So, Tewksbury started eating red meat again, two to three times a week. The results showed what recent studies have, that correcting iron deficiency improves athletic performance.

"The next time I went to altitude I was good," says Tewksbury. "I was as good as the rest of the team. So, I decided to increase it again, and I increased my red meat intake to four to five times a week." Then, when he trained at altitude he had "the best response they had ever seen up at that type of training".

His audience at the cattlemen's convention gave him a standing ovation when he concluded, "And I attribute that directly—I did altitude training three and half weeks before I went to Barcelona—it was directly part of my gold medal. And in effect, eating red meat was as well. That's my beef story"

Tewksbury also captured a bronze medal at the Barcelona games as a member of the mens' 400 m medley relay team. He has a silver medal for the same event at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

Daily iron requirements for adults vary between men and women. Men between the ages of 25 and 49 require eight milligrams daily. Women require 14 mg every day. This requirement drops to seven milligrams after menopause.

Contact: Carolyn McDonell
(416)766-6146

Evaluation reports available on air seeder, packer

The Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre has released evaluation reports on an air seeder and wing-type packer.

The Bourgault 2155 II air seeder and WTP 36-40 wing-type packer were field tested in conjunction with each other. "This combination offers the farmer a one-pass conservation tillage, seeding and packing system," says Greg Magyar, a field technologist at the Lethbridge centre.

Designed for use with different makes and models of cultivators, the air seeder can apply seed, fertilizer, granular chemical, or any combination of two of those operations. The packer can be used with the air seeder or a cultivator, and as a separate operation.

"Fertilizer, granular chemicals and various grains were tested in the lab to let us determine how well the metering and distribution systems worked," says Magyar. The report—number 658—includes information related to the metering accuracy, distribution uniformity and spread uniformity.

During field tests, ease of operating and adjusting the unit, power requirements and operator safety were also evaluated. Maintenance, filling and cleaning, transporting, monitoring and setting the application rate are also covered in the report.

In the packer evaluation report (number 664), soil finishing, packer performance, maintenance, hitching, transporting, power requirements and operator safety are discussed.

For more information about direct seeding and other types of conservation equipment, contact the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre, 3000 College Drive South, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 1L6, or telephone 329-1212.

Contact: Greg Magyar
329-1212

Machinery research centre will test direct seeder

The Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre will test a new direct seeding system this fall.

"We're very excited about testing the Conserva pak because interest in direct seeding has been very high," say Lawrence Papworth, a project engineer at the Lethbridge centre. "Many farmers are interested in one pass seeding units that have very little soil disturbance."

The research centre will test a prototype Conserva pak direct seeding system. The unit will be tested in the Lethbridge region during the fall seeding season.

Papworth notes this system places fertilizer below and slightly to the side of the seed so large amounts of fertilizer can be applied while seeding. Seed and fertilizer depth can be varied independently.

Draft, and seed and fertilizer placement will be observed and measured in field tests. The air delivery system will also be tested in the centre's laboratory.

These tests are the second the system is undergoing in a joint project of the Alberta research centre and the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI). "Earlier in the year, the Conserva pak system was field tested this spring in Saskatchewan," Papworth adds. The tests were conducted by PAMI around Humboldt in eastern Saskatchewan.

The Conserva pak system is manufactured by Valcon Equipment based in Indian Head, Saskatchewan.

For more information, contact the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

Contact: Lawrence Papworth
329-1212

Greenhouse workshop emphasizes business and finance

Anyone interested in learning the business and financial aspects of becoming a commercial greenhouse grower should plan to attend a one-day workshop in Brooks on October 22.

"This isn't a production seminar with tips about growing crops," says Judy Butt, a greenhouse specialist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "The sessions will emphasize the business side of being a greenhouse grower, and particularly start-up."

Two greenhouse growers, one in bedding plants and the other a tomato grower, will discuss how they got started and how they manage their businesses. "It will be a practical session where they'll share their start-up experiences and some of the dos and don'ts of becoming a commercial grower," she says.

Another workshop session will look at structures, design, suppliers and equipment. As well, Peter Macleod, of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation's (ADC) Medicine Hat office, will discuss financial assistance available through ADC.

Pre-registration is required for the workshop. "We will need a minimum registration of 20 people to hold the workshop," says Butt. There is a registration maximum of 50 people.

Participants will be registered when payment is received. The workshop cost is $10.70 (including GST). Cheques can be made out to the Alberta Green Growers Association, the workshop sponsor, and sent to the attention of Mayumi Bunney at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center, S.S. 4, Brooks, Alberta, T1R 1E6.

The workshop will be held at the Brooks Campus of Medicine Hat College. The Brooks campus is five kilometres east of Brooks just off Highway 1. Registrants will receive a map with their confirmation.

Contact: Judy Butt
362-3391

Agri-News briefs

Snow, frost strike Alberta crops

Snow isn't unusual in Alberta, just when it falls over a large area of the province in August. A double cold front swept across Alberta from August 18 through 23. The first front brought showers, some hail and even small tornadoes in central Alberta. Even colder temperatures—in direct contrast to the high 20$C temperatures of earlier in the week—and snow followed. Snow accumulated on the ground in northeastern Alberta on August 21. The next day, the cold front moved south and delivered snow to most parts of southern Alberta. Higher elevations, such as the Milk River ridge, the foothills and the Cypress Hills, received up to 20 cm. Behind the front, temperatures dipped below freezing. Such temperatures cause quality losses in grain and yield losses in green crops. Snow also flatted cereal crops and caused significant losses to a variety of other crops such as corn losing cobs. For more information, contact Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist in Edmonton, at 422-4385.

Feed industry conference puts focus on animal welfare

The 1992 Alberta Feed Industry Conference will examine issues in animal welfare on September 23 and 24 in Lethbridge. The conference agenda has been broken into four topic areas: societal pressures, attitudes of livestock producers, ethical aspects of animal welfare and looking ahead. Theme speaker for the conference is Alan Herscovici, a social and environmental consultant. Herscovici wrote the award winning expose, "Second Nature: The Animal Rights Controversy". The first day also features speakers from outside the agricultural community. A producer panel follows. One-day registrations are available. The conference will be held at the Lethbridge Lodge. Conference sponsors include the Canadian Feed Industry Association (Alberta Division), the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, Alberta Agriculture and the University of Alberta's faculty of agriculture and forestry. For more information, contact Wayne Anderson in Edmonton at 459-3981 or FAX 492-0268.

BERTON WARNS CATTLEMEN ABOUT ANIMAL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Cattle producers are the next major target of the animal rights movement after their successful campaign against the fur industry. So says Pierre Berton, well-known Canadian author and popular historian, who spoke at the recent Canadian Cattlemen's Association national convention. Berton outlined the extremes of the animal rights movement by focusing on the fur industry and medical research. He told his audience the movement is against anyone who deals with animals from meat producers and trappers, to hospital and university researchers. Citing one group's "meat stinks" campaign, Berton warned meat producers they are the next target of the well-organized and well-financed movement. "First, they'd like to get rid of beef, then it will be chicken, and then eggs and milk. They come from animals, too," he said. He also said beef producers needed to be "squeaky clean" in how they treat their livestock, and be on the forefront of treating animals humanely. Berton also advocated a strong coalition with enough money and power to counteract animal rights extremists. "I said this to the dairy people, and I said this to the fur people," he said of past speeches on the subject. "And they said, 'Yes, this is a great idea. We're all going to get together.' But they haven't. Meanwhile this poison is being spread."

Food safety vital to animal health industry success

Our plentiful food supply has shifted consumer concern from quantity, to quality and safety says the past president of the Canadian Animal Health Institute. Tom Mooney, who is also general manager of The Upjohn Company, was a keynote speaker at the opening day of the recent Canadian Cattlemen's Association 60th anniversary convention. Mooney says the industry "can't rest on its past successes", but must continue to discover new animal health care products and innovations that improve production. "The research, development and marketing of new products by the animal health industry has contributed to producers' ability to better manage herd health, control their costs, increase their productivity and produce affordable quality animal food products. Our industry's very existence depends on the research and development of these products which have contributed to increasing food production by more than 200 per cent since World War II." At the same time, the agrifood industry must remain aware of consumer concern with food safety he adds. While Canadians do have the general perception their food is safe, they can be concerned about particular practices such as use of antibiotics. In an interview Mooney said, "Food producing animals are no different than humans. They do suffer diseases and they do require medication from time-to-time". He also added, "When these products are used in the fashion they are intended to be used, there are no violative residues and they contribute to a very healthy and safe food supply". Mooney also encouraged the entire food industry to work together to promote Canada's high quality, safe food supply.

Japanese exchange returns to Alberta

The Labo exchange, a Japanese foundation that has operated for the past 25 years, made its second foray into Alberta this summer. Delegates were last in Alberta in the late 1970s. Ten young Japanese, mostly aged 13 and 14, stayed with host families in central Alberta between July 27 and August 22. About 1,000 Japanese youths were in North America for the program that emphasizes cultural exchange. Six of the 10 stayed with families around Rocky Mountain House. The other four stayed in the Stettler area. Ellen Bonde, a 4-H leader who hosted the group's chaperon, says she had no trouble lining up 4-H and non-4-H families to act as hosts. Host families were asked to let their visitors take part in ordinary life. For some of their visitors, that meant being around animals for the first time. Something out of the ordinary happened for one Tokyo youngster. She carried her country's flag at Showcase'92, the official celebration of 4-H's 75th anniversary in Alberta. For more information, contact Ellen Bonde in Rocky Mountain House at 845-6894, or Ted Youck at the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 427-2541.

Environmental questionnaire now part of doing business

Producers should get used to environmental questions as part of getting a bank loan says the president of the Canadian Bankers' Association. In discussing lenders and environmental responsibility in a keynote address to the recent Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Helen Sinclair said assessing a lender's environmental risk is something that has come about as a result of government legislation. Legislation across Canada is putting clean-up liability on those "in control" of a property, which can become a bank if a person or company goes broke. "I want to convince you," she told the cattlemen, "that our environmental problems are not an we-they issue. It's not a question of us passing it back to you, it's a problem we share together." Currently many lenders require farmers to fill out an environmental questionnaire when they apply for the loan. This can be followed by an on-site environmental checklist and even an environmental audit. But, currently there are no audit standards or accreditation. Sinclair suggested setting those standards is an important part of making the process work. Environmental concerns are related to "sustainable capital", she adds, or the money that will be available for loans, compared to the rallying cry of the environmental movement, sustainable development.

Customer wants foundation of success

Giving customers what they want has been the way McDonald's Restaurants have achieved success, and that is the key for any business, the company's Canadian president told the Canadian Cattlemen's Association 60th anniversary convention. The international's chain—there are more than 11,000 McDonald's worldwide—success, says Ronald Marcoux, "comes when we are mostly clearly customer driven, when we are listening more carefully to our customers and acting on their requests". He cited examples of how customer wants have been met with everything from early campaigns aimed at restaurant cleanliness, to the more recent packaging changes and introduction of the McLean burger, salads and low fat milk products. While hamburgers will remain the core of the company's business he reassured the cattle producers, consumer nutritional concerns will continue to be important. And because myths—whether nutritional or environmental—die hard, he urged the national organization to spend more time and money promoting their product. While commending the Alberta association's "lie swatter" program, Marcoux singled out schools as one of the best targets for information campaigns. He also noted McDonald's use of "good earth grows good food" commercials and tray liners to explain local beef, and never rain forest beef, is used by the restaurant chain.

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AGRI-NEWS

September 7, 1992

Flattened crops can be harvested with specialized equipment

Southern Alberta farmers scrambling to find ways to effectively handle their snow flattened crops, can look north for tips says an Alberta Agriculture farm machinery engineer.

"Crops hit with heavy snow were left lying close the ground, which can make cutting a nightmare," says Marshall Eliason. "Many of the special problems associated with cutting flattened crops are 'normal' for many northern Alberta producers."

Tips and tricks those northern producers have included in their cutting operations may help ease frustrations of the southern producers he adds. Experienced operators can adjust travel speed, reel speed, reel raker finger angle, table angle and draper speed to suit specific crop conditions.

"Travel speeds need to be considerable slower," says Eliason. "With a little care, crop losses need not be high in a flattened stand. Patience is the key to ensuring your losses are kept to a minimum."

As well, adding specialized equipment to swathers and combine tables will help effectively cut flattened, tangled and lodged crops. This includes pickup reels, lifter fingers, plastic-covered skid plates and cutterbars, power dividers and flexible cutterbars.

"While pickup reels offer the most advantages in handling a tangled crop, their availability will be at a premium given the number of producers now looking for them," he says.

Pickup reels are most effective when a crop is tangled with stems lying helter-skelter. Often with this type of lodging, the crop canopy is still tall enough for the reel fingers to work. Then, with the cutterbar close to the ground, a pickup reel can lift and move most of the crop to be cut. However, he says, if the crop is uniformly flat in one direction, the pickup reel might not be able to pick up the crop, and lifter fingers are needed to lift the crop into the cutterbar.

Lifter fingers, placed every to 12 to 16 inches along a cutterbar, can lift a completely flattened crop. They are most effective when cutting across or at an angle to the lean. Most equipment dealers carry them as a stock item, and they come in two types. Spring ones work well in most crops, while rigid fingers work well in viny crops such as peas and canola, and in muddy conditions.

When wet and muddy soil conditions come with flattened crops, adding Ultra High Molecular Weight Plastic (UHMWP) to the cutterbar and skid shoes will decrease mud and soil buildup. UHMWP is available from most plastic suppliers as well as some farm supply stores.

Handling viny crops may require two other types of special equipment: power dividers and flexible cutterbars. "Power dividers are a must," says Eliason. "They provide a vertical cutting action at the table edge allowing for faster travel speeds and reduced crop losses." If producers use only one power divider, they may need to switch from going back and forth across their fields, to going around he adds.

Flexible cutterbars help if pods are close to the ground. They have some flex that allows for a uniform contour cutting bar.

"You have to take care if you add lifters to a flexible cutter bar," he warns. "Stones and field surface variations can cause considerable damage if a lifter gouges and bends a flexible cutterbar."

While some of these pieces of specialized equipment are stocked

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by farm equipment dealers, availability may be limited. "Availability and price should both be considered before you make a purchase," he advises.

Contact: Marshall Eliason
427-2181

Wait to see price prospects from weather battered crops

August snow and frost in Alberta and Saskatchewan set off panic buying on the Winnipeg commodity exchange. While the market has fallen back since, it will be difficult to know the full impact the unusual weather has on crops and prices until harvest is completed.

"The market will respond to yield and quality of the grain and oilseed crops that come in," says Larry Ruud, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

On the oilseed side, the Alberta Wheat Pool had earlier estimated provincial canola yield at 23 bushels per acre, close to a five year average. Saskatchewan yields had also been estimated as near the long term average. "Obviously the weather will have some major implications for yield and quality of the Prairie canola crop," says Al Dooley, another department market analyst. "Price prospects will take time, as the actual harvest has to be assessed."

Other factors in future oilseed prices are U.S. soybean yields—predicted at a record level near 36 bushels per acre—and a record world oilseed production forecast of 225 million tonnes.

Frost will be detrimental for feedgrain prices notes market economist Gisele Magnusson. "Much of the barley and wheat was beyond the stage where light frost would destroy it. However, quality will likely be lower, which means an increase in available feed wheat supplies and higher premiums for heavy barley.

"The problem for average quality feed grains will be finding them a home. It seems probable now, that there will be ample supplies of feedgrains locally, which will keep prices down," she says. Magnusson adds Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) prices for feed wheat and barley will be favorable if large quantities of lower quality feedgrains materialize.

In the wheat market, the Russian ability to pay for wheat, rather than fallout from the weather is of larger interest. The CWB suspended loading Russian ships in August, pending payment for the millions already owed on a $1.5 billion multi-year sale deal. Loading started again late in the month.

"The most absorbing question is how will the wheat—the old USSR must surely import—be paid for. It is not so much a question as to whether it will be done, but who will do it and on what terms," says David Walker, head of the market analysis branch. "The recent suspension of shipments to Russia by the CWB is just part of a much larger bargaining situation than that of Canadian credit for wheat trade." Canadian wheat supplies were predicted to exceed 40 million tonnes this year. That level has been previously achieved twice, last year and in 1969.

Contact: Larry Ruud, Al Dooley, Gisele Magnusson,
or David Walker
427-5387

Snow harvesting yields runoff to dugouts

Alberta farmers harvest a lot of different crops, but snow harvesting may be new to many of them.

This fall Alberta Agriculture's engineering services branch, along with regional and district department staff, will be setting up snow harvesting demonstration sites around the province. "The purpose of the sites is to show how a snow fence can be used to trap snow for filling dugouts," says Darcy Fitzgerald, an agrologist with the branch.

This water management practice may be particularly useful because its simple and low cost. "With water supplies in some parts of the province falling short of needs, small, inexpensive practices such as trapping snow to fill dugouts can easily be placed into the overall farm management plan," he says.

The quality and quantity of water entering a dugout is influenced by its location, construction and inlet channel(s). Size, topography, type of ground cover and use of the water shed area also play a role.

"By properly placing four to six feet high snow fences upwind of the dugout, a large amount of snow can be captured that might normally drift past," he says.

Trapping snow to fill a dugout should also minimize nutrient contamination of dugout water, as well as reduce erosion and water losses connected to runoff he adds.

"Research done in Wyoming by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service on accumulating snow drifts as a water source for stock ponds has shown some positive results," Fitzgerald says.

Contact: Darcy Fitzgerald
427-2181

Liming controls more than algae

Liming offers a broader range of water quality control than just algae control says an Alberta Agriculture regional engineering technologist.

Initial research in a joint University of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture project focused on algae control. As using hydrated lime moved quickly from research project in 1988, to on-farmdemonstration in 1989, and then to province-wide acceptance in 1990, the other benefits of liming became evident says Bob Buchanan.

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"Rooted plants, soil particles, phosphorus build-up and some color problems can also be controlled through liming," says the Barrhead-based Buchanan. Dugouts treated in 1988 and 1989 showed improved water quality for one to three years after treatment he adds. "And, now further research is being planned to look at other dugout treatment products and bacteria control using hydrated lime."

Liming is using hydrated lime—calcium hydroxide—to settle out algae, phosphorus, sediment and some color from dugout water. In 1991 an estimated 1,000 farm dugouts were treated with hydrated lime. Hydrated lime is mixed with water and sprayed evenly across the dugout water surface. Dosage depends on the dugout's size and its alkalinity level. Both must be measured before the treatment.

Buchanan notes the preferred time to lime a slough is early in the year, so livestock, in particular, can have the benefit of better water through the summer season.

The process does cause a temporary increase in the water's pH. "Although there are no direct health concerns with a high pH, it's recommended that the water not be used for livestock, poultry or human consumption until the lime settles," Buchanan says. Generally, lime settles out within three to 10 days after the treatment. Liming can't be done if the dugout has fish. "Fish kill will result," he warns.

Hydrated lime is very corrosive. Safety equipment is required when handling it to protect skin and eyes from chemical burns. To date, custom applicators handle most liming procedures. Currently there are more than 20 custom applicators around the province.

"Because the technology is relatively new, Alberta Agriculture regional engineering technologists continue to work with these custom applicators to improve their equipment, skills and knowledge of dugout water quality," he says.

Treating dugouts with hydrated lime has been effective, but isn't the only tool available for improving dugout water quality he notes. "Farmers should continue other successful dugout maintenance practises including aeration, algae and weed control and sedimentation controls that both protect dugouts and improve water quality."

For more information about dugout liming including a list of custom dugout limers in your area, contact your district or regional Alberta Agriculture office.

Contact: *Bob Buchanan*
674-8252

Lamb, sheep and dogs highlight Olde Tyme Sheep Fair

With the Rockies as a backdrop and a national sheepdog competition as part of the action, the 1992 Olde Tyme Sheep Fair offers a variety of interesting activities and experiences.

The fair will run September 19 and 20 at PaSu Farm west of Carstairs. "The traditional elements of a fair will be there," says Wray Whitmore, of Alberta Agriculture's beef cattle and sheep branch.

Those traditional elements include sheep shearing, dog training, sheep to shawl and other demonstrations. "One of the demonstrations will be edible," he notes. "Lamb will be cooked at one of the booths for people to try, and also for them to learn how to cook lamb."

As well, there will be some hands-on, as fair goers can "touch" displays of exotic sheep and llamas. Sheep shearing and a shepherd's competition will put the focus on some the skills involved in sheep production. Local artists will also be at the fair displaying their handicrafts.

A special feature will be a national lamb carcass competition. "Last year's competition attracted a lot of interest, but unfortunately had to be cancelled because the meat graders were involved in a strike. This year's contest promises to be a good one, and be truly national in scope. We already have an entry from Newfoundland, and expect them from at least Quebec west," Whitmore says. Alberta entries closed September 5.

Lambs will be collected, processed and carcasses judged at seven sites across Canada. Top carcasses will be air freighted to Alberta for further judging to determine the best of the regional winners. Canada West Foods is offering $1,000 for the top lamb carcass. As well, top carcasses will be auctioned at a Saturday evening banquet.

Whitmore notes the Canadian Classic Sheepdog Trials attracted about 5,000 people last year. "People will be able to see some of North America's finest working sheepdogs at the competition," he says.

Contact:	*Wray Whitmore*	*Kim Stanford*
	427-5083	*382-5150*
	PaSu Farm	
	337-2800	

Agri-News briefs

Look south for sheep buyers

Seasonally increased volumes of slaughter lambs undermined prices during August says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Jo Ann Sandhu projects Alberta prices at $55 to $59/cwt. in September and slightly lower at $54 to $58/cwt in October and November, before moving up in December. Feeder lamb markets will follow slaughter prices lower during the fall months she adds. "Prices may be forced even lower if northern producers are forced to drastically reduce the size of their flocks because of feed shortages. Gluts of feeder lambs could undermine prices substantially," Sandhu says. Sheep producers reducing the size of their sheep flocks should make their decision as early as possible to avoid "distress" prices she says. She advises looking for private buyers, especially in the southern part of the province. "Producers there are in relatively good shape in terms of feedgrains and hay," she says. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Hog prices rise in August, autumn fall likely

A global shortage of pork products led to a rise in hog markets says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. In Alberta, notes Jo Ann Sandhu, the producer payment price for Index 100 hogs increased five cents per kilogram between the first week of August and August 20, to $1.29/kg. Retail demand in the U.S. was stronger than normal, and Mexico and Japan increased their pork imports. The EC, particularly Denmark, have reduced their hog output in response to surpluses and low prices two years ago. Tighter than expected pork supplies, combined with strong consumer demand, will likely hold off price declines for live hogs in the short term. However, record U.S. production will push prices lower during the fall and winter. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Fed cattle prices in holding pattern

Fed cattle markets across North American traded in a very narrow range during the last two months. "In Alberta, July and August monthly average prices for Alberta Direct Sale steers were essentially identical," says Ron Gietz, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "The lack of a mid-summer slump in the cattle markets," he adds, "was encouraging to cattle feeders who still appear to be marketing cattle as they are ready." Gietz projects average Alberta Direct Sale steer prices at $80/cwt for September, moving slightly higher to $81 in October and November. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Feeder prices mixed through August

Feeder cattle prices were mixed across the province for the first three weeks of August. Prices in southern Alberta were lower, in central Alberta steady to lower and in the north, steady to higher on record volumes. "Large numbers of animals are coming out of the northeast as pastures are closed and low feed supplies become apparent," says Gisele Magnusson, an Alberta Agriculture market economist. She adds increased numbers of animals are also expected to come out of the Peace region. As well, with large numbers of cattle going through auctions, there have been reports of sellers having to be turned away. "The period of peak fall marketings is nearing and will put downward pressure on feeder prices," she says. She advises producers to market early to avoid seasonally low prices. For more information, contact Magnusson in Edmonton at 427-5387.

First Warmblood stallion licensing

Ten Warmblood and Selle Francais stallions were recently reviewed in the first Canadian Warmblood Horse Breeders Association (CWHBA) stallion licensing. The inspections took place over two days in Quebec and Ontario. The stallions were evaluated for conformation, movement and jumping style. Six of the horses received two year licenses. The next licensings will take place in Alberta and British Columbia later this year. For more information, contact Chris Gould of the CWHBA in Mayerthorpe at (403)786-4337.

Forage seed prices begin rebound

Forage seed prices appear to have begun a long-awaited upswing says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Average annual price data confirms what has been felt to be true for some time," says Al Dooley. "Generally, the market has rebounded from the very poor prices of the past couple of years." Current prices are, in most cases, above those of the 1991-92 crop year. Those prices, however, still lag behind the five year 1987-91 average. The creeping red fescue harvest is complete he adds. Yields were generally better than pre-harvest expectations. The price for common no.1 seed remains at 70 to 75 cents per pound. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Horse improvement program coming to Red Deer

The 1992 Alberta Horse Improvement Program (HIP) will be held at the Westerner in Red Deer during the last two weekends in September. HIP is designed to identify superior Alberta-bred horses and breeders who produce useful, athletic horses. Horses are evaluated using a scoring system that rates basic conformation and athletic movement against their breed ideal. The program provides an opportunity to see what quality of horses are being produced by the province's breeders. Evaluation dates are as follows: Arabians, Morgans and Saddlebreds on September 19; Sport horses, Welsh ponies and Tennessee Walkers on September 20; Quarter Horses and Pintos on September 26; and, Appaloosas and Paints on September 27. For more information, contact Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650, or in Edmonton at 427-8906.

Coming agricultural events

Equifair (Alberta Breeds for the World) at the Masters
Spruce Meadows
Calgary . . . . September 8-13
Randy Fedorak - 254-3200 - Calgary

Canadian Team Cattle Penning Finals
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . September 12-13
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

National Dairy Council of Canada annual general meeting and convention
Radisson Plaza Hotel
St. John's, Newfoundland . . . . September 13-16
Dale Tulloch - (613)238-4116 - Ottawa, Ontario

Alberta Horse Improvement Program (HIP)
Westerner
Red Deer . . . . September 19-20
. . . . September 26-27
Les Burwash - 297-6650 - Calgary; Bob Coleman - 427-8905 - Edmonton

Animal Welfare, Animal Rights and Agriculture conference
Lethbridge Lodge
Lethbridge . . . . September 23-24
Wayne Anderson - 459-3981 - St. Albert

National Quarter Horse show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . September 23-27
Barb McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Annual meeting of the Canadian Entomological Society and Saskatchewan Entomological Society
Delta Bessborough
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan . . . . September 27-30
P.G. Mason - (306)975-7014 - Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

1st Circumpolar Agricultural Conference: Sustainable Agriculture in a circumpolar environment
Whitehorse, Yukon . . . . September 28 - October 2
Rachael Lewis - (403)668-7663 - Whitehorse, Yukon

Smoky Lake World Pumpkin Federation Weighoff
Smoky Lake . . . . October 2-3
Town office - 656-3674 - Smoky Lake; (evenings)Larry Lafleur - 656-3539 - Smoky Lake; (evenings) Barry Court - 656-3508 - Smoky Lake

17th annual Poultry Servicemen's Workshop
Chateau Lake Louise
Lake Louise . . . . October 6-8
Rod Chernos - 948-8533 - Airdire

Cutting Horse Futurity
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . October 15-17
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Canadian Agricultural Finance conference
Delta Meadowvale
Mississauga, Ontario . . . . October 18-21
Cathy Frederickson - (416)362-6092 - Toronto, Ontario

Canadian Thoroughbred Horse sale
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . October 24
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

4th biennial National Ag in the Classroom conference
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton . . . . October 24-27
REDA office - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Annual meeting of the American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America and the Soil Society of America
Minneapolis, Minnesota . . . . November 1-6
ASA/CSSA/SSSA - (608)273-8080 - Madison, Wisconsin

"Erosion: causes to cures" short course and conference
Ramada Renaissance
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . November 2-4
Ray Pentland - (306)949-8288 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Conservation 2000 syposiums
The Barn, Lethbridge Community College . . . . . November 3
Jim Hahn - 382-3406 - Lethbridge
Drumheller Inn, Drumheller . . . . November 4
JoAnne Meents - 290-4648 - Calgary
Norseman Inn, Camrose . . . . November 5
Brian Fuller - 672-5772 - Camrose
Sexsmith . . . . November 6
Gerald Rutberg - 538-0144 - Grande Prairie

Alberta Horticultural Congress and trade show
Coast Terrace Inn/Convention Inn South
Edmonton . . . . November 5-7
Simone Demers Collins - 427-7366 - Edmonton

Alberta Market Gardners Association annual meeting
Edmonton . . . . November 6
Tam Volk - 921-2272 - Bon Accord

Farmfair'92
Edmonton Northlands Agricom
Edmonton . . . . November 6-14
Leroy Emerson - 471-7210 - Edmonton

Agri-Trade International Farm Equipment and Services exposition
Westerner Park
Red Deer . . . . November 11-14
Pat Kennedy - 347-4491 - Red Deer

"Oats—The Versatile Alternative" (Oat Producers Association of Alberta symposium)
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton . . . . November 18-19
Glen Binnington - 444-0066 - Edmonton

1992 Farming for the Future conference
Westerner Exposition
Red Deer . . . . November 19
Patrick Marce - 427-1956 - Edmonton

15th anniversary Peace region Farm Women's conference
Dunvegan Motor Inn
Fairview . . . . November 19-20
Margurite Thiessen - 836-3351 - Manning: Carmen Andrew - 524-3301 - Valleyview

Alberta Beekeepers Association annual general meeting and convention
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton . . . . November 25-26
Gertie Adair - 489-6949 - Edmonton

Poultry and Rabbit Show
Agricultural Pavilion
Calgary . . . . November 27-19
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

Canadian Western Agribition
Exhibition Park
Regina, Saskatchewan . . . . . . November 28 - December 4
Canadian Western Exhibition Association - (306)565-0565 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association annual meeting and trade show
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff . . . . December 2-5
Nigel Bowles - 489-1991 - Edmonton

97th Western Stock Growers Association annual convention, short course and trade fair
Capri Centre
Red Deer . . . . December 10-12
Pam Miller - 250-9121 - Calgary

1993

Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association
Ramada Renaissance
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan . . . . January 6-8
WCWGA head office - (306)586-5866 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Unifarm annual convention
Edmonton, Alberta . . . . January 11-14
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association annual convention and trade show
Marlborough Inn
Calgary . . . . January 15-16
ACFA office - 250-2509 - Calgary, or 1-800-363-8598

Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer . . . . January 15-17
Les Burwash - 297-6650 - Calgary

Alberta Canola Producers Commission annual convention
Hilton Hotel
Edmonton . . . . January 17-19
Pansy Molen - 452-6487 - Edmonton

1993 Soil Conservation Workshop and ACTS 15th annual meeting
Fanatasyland Hotel
Edmonton . . . . January 17-20
Peter Gamache - 422-4385 - Edmonton; Russ Evans - 936-5306 - Indus

Banff Pork Seminar
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff . . . . January 19-22
Judy Carss - 492-2343 - Edmonton

Canada West Equipment Dealers Association annual general meeting and convention
Empress Hotel and Victoria Conference Centre
Victoria, British Columbia . . . . January 21-23
William Lipsey - 250-7581 - Calgary

4th biennial Alberta Farm Women's conference
Cedar Park Inn
Edmonton . . . . January 29-30
Janet Walter - 347-0600 - Red Deer

Agriculture Week
Alberta . . . . March 7-13
Bard Haddrell - 427-2127 - Edmonton

Canadian Forage Council
International Inn
Winnipeg, Manitoba . . . . March 7-10
Marjorie Zingle or Gina Grosenick - 244-4487 - Calgary

Western Canadian Dairy Seminar
Capril Centre
Red Deer . . . . March 9-12
Judy Carss - 492-2343 - Edmonton

International Workshop on Sustainable Land Management for the 21st Century
University of Lethbridge
Lethbridge . . . . June 20-26
Cindy LaValley - 329-2244 - Lethbridge

VII World Conference on Animal Production
Edmonton Convention Centre
Edmonton . . . . June 28 to July 2

Department of Animal Science (University of Alberta) - 492-3232 - Edmonton

Agri-Trade International Farm Equipment and Services exposition
Westerner Park
Red Deer . . . . November 10-13
Pat Kennedy - 347-4491 - Red Deer

Note: Alberta communities host a number of local fairs. Because there are so many, they are not listed in the "Coming Agricultural Events" list. A list of agricultural society fairs was compiled by the community and rural services branch and is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Coming agricultural events

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in December 1992, or early in 1993? Are there any events omitted in the attached list?

- Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name**, **city** or **town**, and **phone number** of a contact person for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by November 25, 1992 to:

Agri-News Editor
Print Media Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed December 7, 1992)

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

September 14, 1992

FSAM benefit in NISA application for 1991 tax year

Applying for the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA) could have an extra benefit for farmers in the 1991 tax year, even if they don't qualify for a payout says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

And if farmers want to take advantage of that opportunity, they should hurry as the application deadline is September 30 says Merle Good of the farm business management branch in Olds.

"This one-time benefit is available through the federal government's Farm Support and Adjustment Measures (FSAM) special assistance program," he says. Good adds he explained the benefit during Unifarm sponsored meetings across the province designed to give farmers more information about NISA.

For example, if a farmer's eligible sales are $100,000, then the two per cent NISA contribution is $2,000. Both levels of government contribute another $2,000. FSAM contributes another one and one-half per cent, or $1,500. This puts a total of $5,500 in the individual's NISA account.

"Or, the producer has the option of assigning these funds as part of their producer contribution," he says.

Using the previous example, the $1,500 would make up the majority of the producer's NISA contribution. The farmer would only have to add another $500 to make up the two per cent contribution. "The total in the NISA account is $4,000, or a 8:1 benefit from the farmer's $500 contribution," he adds.

NISA allows farmers to deposit up to two per cent of their eligible net sales into a personal account. Both the federal and provincial governments make a matching contribution of one per cent each, effectively doubling the producer's investment. Either a stabilization or minimum income trigger allow farmers to collect from the account.

NISA accounts also earn a three per cent interest bonus on producer contributions. Good also notes the interest clock begins ticking as soon as the NISA administration receives a farmer's application.

In Alberta, the NISA program was recently expanded to include ranch fur and non-edible horticulture such as bedding plants, flowers, sod, seeds and bulbs. All eligible producers have until September 30 to apply for NISA. Application forms are available by calling the federal government's NISA information line at 1-800-665-NISA (6472). Operators can also answer questions about the program or the application form.

NISA applications for the 1991 tax year will be accepted after September 30, until December 31, 1992, but benefits will be reduced by five per cent per month after the September 30 deadline.

Contact: *Merle Good*
556-4237

Early harvest weather challenges farmers

Early hot and dry conditions followed by showers, a rare August snow storm, killing frosts, several hail storms and even small tornadoes were what Alberta farmers had to cope with in August says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"While the weather was pretty good for most farmers during the

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This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

first half of the month, it didn't help farmers in north central Alberta. Dry conditions reduced pastures and crop growth, and depleted water supplies," says Peter Dzikowski of the conservation and development branch. "Then, an outbreak of cold Arctic air on the weekend of August 20 brought snow and freezing temperatures across most of the province."

Monthly temperatures in August varied from near normal to two degrees Celsius below the August normal he says. "The first half of the month was very warm, about two to four degrees above normal. The latter half was much cooler with temperatures three to five degrees below normal."

In fact, several record minimum temperatures were set between August 22 and 25. For example, Pincher Creek cooled off to a frosty -7.5°C on August 25. Most areas, he adds, received a killing frost with temperatures dropping below -2°C.

August precipitation was generally well below normal in northern and central regions and above normal in southern Alberta. Most of the south received snow during the third week of August.

The lowest precipitation total for the month was recorded at Lloydminster's airport. The 17.1 mm was only 24 per cent of the August normal.

Bow Island recorded the highest precipitation total for the month. The 62.4 mm that fell on Alberta's bean capital was about 78 per cent above the normal monthly value of 35 mm.

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Agri-food diversity highlighted at research conference

Technology drives life in the 1990s like an engine powers an automobile, and for a sample of that power in Alberta's agri-food industry, you can attend the 1992 Farming for the Future Conference.

Scheduled for November 19 at the Westerner Exposition in Red Deer, the conference is designed for producers, processors, researchers, agribusinesses, teachers, students and the general public. Its theme is agri-food diversification.

"Alberta's agri-food scientists, some of the best in the world, are exploring new frontiers and making exciting discoveries. This leading-edge research and technology transfer will contribute to the success of the province's agri-food industry into the year 2000 and beyond. You'll be able to experience some of these important discoveries at the conference," says Patrick Marce, research information officer with Alberta Agriculture's research division.

"The conference will offer an interesting mixture of research and on-farm demonstration presentations—in plain language—and, a showcase of displays illustrating new developments in crop, livestock and agricultural processing," he adds.

A morning plenary session kicks off the day-long conference. Concurrent sessions on crops, livestock and agricultural processing will be held in the afternoon, followed by an on-farm demonstration session. The day concludes with a evening banquet featuring Shirley McClellan, Alberta's associate minister of agriculture, as the keynote speaker.

"Farming for the Future, through its research and on-farm demonstration projects, has compiled an outstanding record of achievement since its inception in 1979," he notes. Results range from improved crop varieties and livestock production methods, to innovative food packaging and preservation techniques.

The conference is sponsored by the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute, a Crown corporation, and Alberta's leading agricultural research co-ordinating and funding organization.

For more information about the conference, contact the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute Edmonton at 427-1956.

Contact: Patrick Marce
427-1956

Updated cattle nutrition home study course available

Rumen microbes, mycotoxins, trace minerals and grinding versus rolling grain are among the variety of topics found in the most recent Alberta Agriculture cattle nutrition home study course.

"The course is written for people who want to upgrade their knowledge of beef and dairy cattle nutrition," says Dale Engstrom, acting head of the beef cattle and sheep branch's nutrition section. "And, it's something you might want to try this winter."

"Farmers, college students and feed salesmen have found the course worthwhile," he adds. While not required, many course participants have chosen to write the final examination to test themselves and to receive a certificate showing they completed the course.

In 1990 all the chapters of the course were overhauled and three new chapters were added. Some of the new topics included in the updated course are: feed processing, forage preservatives, speciality feeds, feed additives, the effects of cold stress, feeding the dry cow and feeding concentrates to lactating cows.

"Because nutrition shouldn't be considered in isolation from all the other aspects of cattle management, the course shows the relationship between nutrition and disease, calving difficulty, fertility and profitability of the beef operation," Engstrom says.

"Home study courses are designed to learn by doing, so many examples and exercises are included in this cattle nutrition course. For example, participants can submit one forage and one grain sample for nutrient analysis," says Faye Douglas-Phillips, co-ordinator of the home study program. Course participants can also move on to a beef ration software program, Cowbytes. Cowbytes is also available through the home study program.

The cattle nutrition course is available for $45 (plus GST). Additional handling charges apply if the order is from outside Alberta. To order, send a cheque made payable to the Rural

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Education and Development Association (REDA) to 14815-119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9.

Application forms with more information are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, or the home study program in Edmonton at 427-2404.

Other home study courses available are: dairy production, animal health, understanding profit, home-based business, Alberta irrigation management, Alberta pork production, Alberta soils, Alberta weeds, beef herd management, crop protection, farm estate planning, farm home planning, and Cowchip$ (beef management software program).

Contact: *Dale Engstrom* *Faye Douglas-Phillips*
427-8906 *427-2404*

Give yard, garden fall care

An early glimpse of winter was a reminder for what should be done around your yard before winter really sets in.

Clean-up, mulching and watering are three of the last steps in looking after gardens and lawns before winter hits says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Fall work is the first step in preparing for a successful growing season next year says Shelley Barkley. "A little work this fall will ensure healthier plants next spring," says the information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks.

Fall clean-up should start with removing dead and dying plant material from the garden, perennial and flower beds. "Don't dig the refuse in, remove it as a disease prevention. Removing all of the top material from a perennial border helps to prevent overwintering diseases and insects. The debris material can be composted, provided it's disease-free.

"Although the debris can help hold a snow cover during the winter, it's a better idea to mulch with a clean material such as peat moss or wood chips. Spading, or turning over the soil between the plant crowns, also helps to trap snow," she says.

Digging over the garden and annual flower beds with a spade is also beneficial because it improves soil texture. Barkley says to dig to a full spade depth and leave the lumps. Frost action will break down the lumps over the winter. Then in the spring, simple forking will get the beds ready for planting.

Mulching is also important for the strawberry patch and roses. Strawberries should be mulched when the temperature drops to -7°C and stays there for three or four nights. Straw is excellent mulch, but she recommends sprinkling mouse bait around before applying the mulch to limit damage from mice. The same preventative procedure applies to preparing roses for the winter.

"Wintering tender and semi-tender—hybrid tea, graniflora and floribunda—roses is a two-step process," says Barkley, "And, it should start in the summer by stopping fertilizer at the end of July and cutting stems of flowers shorter during August so new growth is reduced. Water should also be cut back during September."

Several hard frosts should occur before putting insulating materials in and around the roses. First, soak the plant roots well. Prune the roses 25 to 30 cm from the ground. This will also make mulching easier. Insulation can be dried grass clippings, peat moss, leaf litter or compost.

"Apply whatever you choose as an insulating material evenly in and around the rose crowns. Don't pack it too tightly," she says. The insulating material can be removed in the spring once the buds have started to swell. Then, prune the canes back to the third or fifth outside bud.

Barkley also recommends adding to the natural snow cover. "Shovel snow on the plant as another layer of insulation. This is especially important if the roses are in a southern exposure."

Moisture reserves in the root zone are important to all perennials, trees and shrubs including the lawn she adds. "Providing water at this time of year will ensure that there is a reserve next spring for plants to draw from. Watering should be done in mid-October or just before the ground freezes, whichever comes first."

Barkley notes raspberries should also be watered well in the late fall after their leaves have dropped.

Raking leaves shouldn't be ignored she notes. "Raking tidies the yard and removes overwintering sites for many insects and diseases."

Fall is also a good time to control lawn weeds. "Dandelions, chickweed and clover are susceptible to herbicides applied in the early fall. Pick a warm day for application and use a large water drop size," she says.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Frost signal to dig summer bulbs

While frost came early in many parts of Alberta, it's still a sign for gardeners to take care of their flowering bulbs says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

Common summer flowering bulbs, such as begonias, dahlias and gladiolus, aren't hardy. They must be lifted in the fall and stored indoors over the winter says Pam North, of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton.

"Each type of bulb requires different treatment," she says. For example,begonias can be dug up before or after the first frost. Tops should be left intact and as much soil as possible should be left on the tubers. Store in an airy, cool location (12 to 15°C) for about three weeks until stems break off easily from the tubers. Then, clean off the soil and small roots and dust tubers with a bulb dust containing captan. For winter storage, place the tubers in vermiculite or peat moss and keep them at between seven and 15 degrees Celsius.

North says it's best to wait until after a frost before digging up gladioli. "This will give them as long a growing season as possible

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and maximize the corm size."

After digging, cut off the tops close to the corms and cure in a warm location for two weeks. "When the old corms separate easily from the new ones, it's time to clean them off and remove any soil or loose outer skin," she says.

Store the gladioli corms in open trays or paper bags at between five and 10 degrees Celsius. Before storing, dust with a bulb dust containing captan and malathion.

"Dahlias are different again. You want to store them for the shortest possible time as they often dry out in storage. Leave them in the ground for as long as possible and lift them out before the ground freezes," she advises.

Start by cutting back the plant to about 10 cm from the soil surface. Dig carefully to avoid breaking the roots and prevent damage to the neck where next year's buds start.

After lifting, turn upside down in a sunny location to drain water from the hollow stems.

Keep the bulbs at room temperature until the soil falls off them. Dust with a fungicide and store in slightly moist peat moss or vermiculite. "They need to be in a cool location, between two and seven degrees. Higher temperatures will encourage sprouting," says North.

She also advises checking the tubers throughout the winter. If they are dry, sprinkle lightly with water.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Try fall seeding for earlier veggie crop

Anyone who longs for garden fresh vegetables early in the season, might want to try fall seeding says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Fall seeding is definitely a way to get a head start on the growing season," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. "For example, lettuce can be ready by late June, carrots in early July and onions and garlic mature three weeks earlier than if seeded in the spring."

Not all vegetables are suitable for fall seeding she cautions. Cool season crops are the best choices. These include onions, carrots, parsnips, spinach, lettuce and garlic.

Timing is also critical to fall seeding. "You want to seed into dry soil and just before the ground freezes. That's usually in late October," North says.

North says a light soil with lots of organic matter works best when fall seeding. "A heavy clay soil will form a crust which may prevent seedlings from germinating in the spring."

She also advises choosing a spot in the garden that won't be in the way of spring activity. The area should be sheltered, so wind can't blow seeds and soil away.

The same kind of soil preparation goes into fall seeding as when planting a garden in the spring. The soil must be worked and large lumps broken up to make a fine seedbed, then levelled.

Seeding itself is also the same as in the spring, with one exception. "Sow the seed at the same depth as you normally would in the spring, but sow more thickly because often about 10 per cent of the seeds don't germinate."

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Alberta Agriculture appointments

Forage nutritionist joins Field Crops Development Centre

Al McNeil is Alberta Agriculture's new forage nutritionist. Most recently the north central regional dairy specialist, McNeil will work from the Field Crops Development Centre in Lacombe. McNeil will bridge plant and animal agriculture in his work, by tressing forage as a quality product produced by one agricultural sector for use by another and the "quality" needs of different livestock. "Forage quality is fascinating. Quality means different things for different classes of animals. Top quality forages and the feeding management of these forages can make a huge difference to the bottom line. Yet, we really have only started to answer the questions on feeding top quality forages to animals," he says. McNeil's previous experience includes work as a nutritionist with Alberta Agriculture and Shur-Gain. "That experience coupled with trouble shooting forage and feeding problems while I was regional dairy specialist has given me a sound theoretical and practical basis for this new job," he adds. McNeil holds a MSc in livestock nutrition (1987) and BSc in range and wildlife management (1978) from the University of British Columbia. He can be reached in Lacombe at 782-4641.

New grain market analyst

Larry Ruud is Alberta Agriculture's new grain market analyst. Ruud joins the market analysis branch after spending four years with the department's planning secretariat as a planner/analyst. In his new position, Ruud will provide market outlooks and extension programs including contributions to the branch's weekly and monthly outlook reports. "I look forward to working with farmers in the marketing of their crops. Give me a call," he says. Raised on a mixed farm south of Vermilion, he farmed before joining Alberta Agriculture. He also did farm financial consultant work in the northeast region in 1987-88. Ruud holds BSc (1986) and masters (1988) degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Alberta. He can be reached in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Agri-News briefs

Autumn pine needle shed normal

Yellow and brown pine needles in the fall are likely part of natural shedding, not a sign of disease says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist. "Autumn needle shed is particularly visible in pine trees because of their open growth habit," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre. Pine trees usually keep their needles for three to four years. Eventually they turn color and fall off. Trees will get new growth on branch ends the following spring. "While chances are the natural process is the cause, it's a good idea to check pine trees carefully for signs of insects or diseases that have similar symptoms," she says. Trees under stress from drought, poor soil fertility, transplant shock or pesticide damage, may also shed needles. Spruce trees also shed six or seven year old needles, but because they are more dense, the browning isn't as noticeable. For more information, contact North in Edmonton at 422-1789.

September time to "manage" rhubarb

Late September is usually the best time to divide a rhubarb plant that's become too big says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist. "You should wait until after a hard frost before you disturb the plant," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre. A sharp spade can be used to slice off a piece of the crown section of the plant, or lift the entire plant and divide it. At least two eyes with the crown and some storage roots should be included. For more information, contact North in Edmonton at 422-1789.

World pumpkin weigh off coming to Smoky Lake October 3

Smoky Lake will offer the living proof of its claim as Alberta's pumpkin on October 3. The community is one of five Canadian sites in the 1992 World Pumpkin Conferation weigh off. Growers in more than a dozen countries participate in the weigh off. Prizes in Smoky Lake include $750 for the heaviest pumpkin, $250 for the largest squash and $100 for the biggest watermelon. In 1991 a Saskatoon grower set a local weigh off record with a 438.5 lb. pumpkin. Alberta records were also set with a 309.5 lb. squash and a 36.5 lb. watermelon. The world winners in 1991 were a 780.5 pumpkin, a 733 lb. squash and a 229.5 watermelon. The weigh off runs between 9 and 11 a.m. at the Smoky Lake Agricultural Complex. A number of other activities are associated with the weigh off including a pancake breakfast, poultry and bench shows, charity pumpkin auction, farmer's market and pumpkin fest and harvest hoedown. For more information, call 656-3730 or 656-3674 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., or 565-3508 or 656-3539 between 6 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

September 21, 1992

1992 Alberta farm water initiatives announced

Alberta Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan have introduced a number of water assistance measures in response to drought conditions in some areas of the province.

"Northeastern Alberta is again being negatively affected by drought conditions. Our primary concern is domestic and livestock water supplies, which continue to be deficient in northeastern Alberta. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the Alberta government is implementing a number of initiatives that will again benefit producers in this region," says Isley.

The 1992 Emergency Farm Water Supply Assistance Program will refund up to $500 on emergency projects built to water livestock. This applies only to producers in: the counties of Athabasca, Barrhead, Beaver, Lac Ste. Anne, Lamont, Minburn, Smoky Lake, St. Paul, Thorhild, Two Hills and Vermilion River; the municipal districts of Bonnyville, Sturgeon, Wainwright and Westlock; and, improvement districts 15 and 17 East and 18 South. Because the northern portions of the counties of Strathcona and Flagstaff are also experiencing significant water shortfalls, administrators will consider applications from these areas on a case-by-case basis.

"In addition to the northeast and northwest regions, there are other parts of the province that are experiencing water supply problems. Virtually no snow accumulated, resulting in little run-off in areas of the Peace River Region. Extremely dry conditions this summer have further reduced surface water supplies. Recent precipitation in many areas of the province has not replenished water supplies to the extent needed," says McClellan. "Due to the variety of locations experiencing water supply shortfalls, the Alberta Government is reducing dugout pumping rates and implementing a water hauling assistance program for all affected Alberta producers."

Provincial dugout pumping rates are being reduced by 75 per cent and will allow producers to fill or top-up farm dugouts and reservoirs. Through the dugout pumping program, the province provides pumps and pipe to draw water from a source to farm dugouts. Producers are encouraged to fill their dugouts as soon as possible to take advantage of warmer weather and longer days.

The province-wide water hauling assistance program refunds producers for 50 per cent of commercial hauling costs based on set, per mile rates. A maximum grant of $2,000 per farmer is available on hauls of less than five miles. Where longer hauls are necessary, the maximum grant is $3,000.

"In addition to these initiatives, which are estimated to cost approximately $1.65 million, the province is also increasing its funding to the Supplemental Rural Water Development Program, introduced in response to last year's drought in the northeast," adds Isley. "The response to the program was overwhelming, and we expect a cost overrun of approximately $2 million. To minimize delays in paying producers under this program, we are increasing provincial funding by $2 million to cover the shortfall."

Projects undertaken between January 1, 1992, and December 31, 1992, are eligible for these initiatives. The application deadline is March 31, 1993. Program details and application forms are available at Alberta Agriculture regional and district offices.

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McClellan also notes the number of crop, forage and revenue insurance contracts has increased in northeastern Alberta. "This is reassuring," she says, "and assures that more farmers will have reasonable levels of income. The Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation will do everything it can to adjust crops and forage acres and process claims as quickly as possible."

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Tax deferral program extended to 23 more Alberta municipalities

Farmers forced to sell livestock because of drought conditions got some good news from the federal government.

Producers across wide areas of the three western provinces have been granted a one-year tax deferral on sales of their breeding livestock. Twenty three Alberta municipalities were named in this announcement. Six others were named last month.

A total of 74 Saskatchewan rural municipalities and the entire British Columbia Peace region were also named in the program announcement.

If farmers are forced to sell part of their herd, the deferral allows them to exclude part of that income from their taxable income. "This provides producers with a way to replace their breeding stock in the future," says Paul Gervais of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

Eligible areas were determined by soil moisture and water supply conditions during the 1992 growing season. Most eastern and many southern and northern Alberta farmers will qualify for the program because they faced significant feed and water shortages.

The eligible Alberta areas are: the counties of Grande Prairie, Warner, Thorhild, Forty Mile, Beaver, Barrhead, Athabasca, Smoky Lake, St. Paul, Strathcona, Two Hills, Vermilion River, Lethbridge, Minburn, Lac Ste. Anne and Lamont; the municipal districts of Cypress, Cardston, Taber, Wainwright, Bonnyville, Sturgeon, Westlock and Spirit River; and improvement districts 15, 17 (East), 18 (South), 20 and 21.

Last year livestock producers in 17 Alberta municipalities were eligible for the program. "For some of these farmers, who qualify again this year, there is an extra benefit," says Gervais. "They may defer any sale income from 1991 for another year, along with a 1992 deferral," says Gervais. "This may be particularly important to producers who haven't been able to rebuild their herds because conditions haven't improved. The deferral gives them an option for the future."

The Drought Induced Sales of Breeding Animals program was first announced in 1988. The program has two tax deferrals. If producers reduce their herd by at least 15 per cent and less than 30 per cent, they can defer 30 per cent of their sale income. If they are forced to sell 30 or more per cent of their breeding herd, they can defer 90 per cent of that sale income. However, if the producer buys more breeding stock in the same year, that cost must be deducted from their total sales.

Farmers must request the tax deferral when they file their 1992 income tax return. More information is available by contacting a district taxation office.

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Growing season plagued by weather woes

For many Alberta farmers the story of the 1992 growing season started in the fall of 1991 with below normal precipitation says Alberta Agriculture's weather specialist.

"The below normal precipitation through the fall and winter of 1991-92 left northeastern and southern Alberta with very low soil moisture levels for the spring of 1992," says Peter Dzikowski.

Lack of rainfall in the spring and early summer caused drought stress to crops and reduced on-farm water supplies for both domestic and livestock use Dzikowski notes. Wet weather in late June and throughout July did improve growing conditions in southern and central parts of the province he adds. "Unfortunately, below normal rainfall in north central Alberta continued the drought stress to crops and pastures, and made on-farm water supply problems more severe."

An early snow storm that swept across the province in late August was the crowning touch on an unusual crop season. The storm flattened crops. Freezing temperatures, as low as -7°C in some places, put an end to the growing season.

"Oddly enough, the 1992 growing season had near normal temperatures for five months, from April through August," he says.

The provincial average total precipitation was 242 mm, about 10 per cent below the normal value of 270 mm. This provincial value is an average of data from 30 locations across Alberta. "The averages hide the wide variations in conditions during the growing season and across the province," Dzikowski notes.

Crop season precipitation totals varied from a low of 178.6 mm at Lac La Biche, 57 per cent of its normal, to a high of 452.5 mm at Pincher Creek, 144 per cent of the growing season normal.

Contact: *Peter Dzikowski*
422-4385

Alberta farmers gain market access in NAFTA

Market access is what Alberta farmers will gain with the recently negotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Removing tariffs and non-tariff barriers should encourage growth of Alberta agricultural exports to Mexico," says Reynold Jaipaul, an agricultural economist with the department's trade policy secretariat. The export growth list includes pork, beef, purebred cattle, dairy products, wheat, barley, canola, seed potatoes, mushrooms and special crops.

In 1991 Alberta exported mainly wheat and dairy products to Mexico he adds. Last year's export total was only $11.4 million.

Both Canada and Mexico agreed to eliminate all tariff and non-tariff barriers—with certain exceptions—on their agricultural trade. The exceptions are the supply managed dairy, poultry and egg sectors, and sugar.

Most tariffs will be phased out over 10 years. "The phase-out period will be longer for some commodities, such as Mexico's corn and beans. Both commodities are sensitive to imports, so tariffs will be in place for 15 years," he says.

A major trade barrier for Canada's grain industry will also change. Mexico agreed to convert its import licensing system into tariffs or tariff rate quotas (TRQs). "Once the quota is reached, a higher tariff rate is applied to the additional goods," Jaipaul explains. "For some commodities the TRQ will increase by five per cent every year. However, TRQs and grain-related tariffs are expected to be phased out over the next 10 years."

When the agreement becomes law, Canada will immediately exempt Mexico from import restrictions on: beef and veal; margarine; and, barley and wheat and their products. Canada will also exclude Mexico from its meat import laws. As well, tariffs on many fruits and vegetables will end immediately, or be phased-out during the first five or 10 years of the agreement. Special safeguard provisions will apply to import sensitive commodities such as tomatoes, cucumbers and frozen strawberries.

Agricultural trade is covered two ways in the trade pact, in three-way (trilateral) and two-way (bilateral) agreements. Domestic support programs, export subsidies and health standards are dealt with in trilateral agreements. Market access is in separate bilateral agreements between Canada and Mexico, and Mexico and the U.S. The provisions of the Canada-U.S. trade agreement will apply between Canada and the U.S.

"Canada went into the trade talks with four basic goals, and achieved them," notes Jaipaul. Those goals included: freer access to the Mexican market on equal or equivalent terms as the U.S.; preserving and enhancing Canada-U.S. trade agreement benefits; retaining Canada's reputation as an attractive investment location; and, preserving Canada's supply management system for dairy, poultry and eggs.

The NAFTA pact is now being fine tuned and having its legal text written. Canada, the United States and Mexico agreed on the trade pact in mid-August. NAFTA creates the world's largest free trade area with a combined population of 370 million and gross domestic product of over $7 trillion. It's expected to take effect on January 1, 1994.

Contact: Reynold Jaipaul
427-2637

Window of opportunity for alternate crops

Changes in the United States and freer trade in North America are providing a window of opportunity for Alberta producers to get into special crops.

As with many other agricultural commodities, Alberta producers already have some production advantages. Gordon Frank, Brooks district agriculturist, describes Alberta as one of the best places in the world to grow alternate crops. "The advantages include abundant irrigation water or timely rains in most non-irrigated areas, relatively low costs of production, fresh air and sunshine," he says.

Increased opportunities to market those crops have boosted the potential alternate crops have for Alberta farmers. The Canada-U.S. trade agreement (CUSTA) and the recently negotiated North American free trade agreement (NAFTA) are obvious sources of opportunity.

"There is significant potential," says Nithi Govindasamy, assistant director of Alberta Agriculture's trade policy secretariat. Peas, beans and lentils, for example, are currently tariff free in the Canada-U.S. trade agreement. Through NAFTA, Mexico will immediately eliminate tariffs on dried peas, most dried beans and lentils when the agreement takes effect in 1994.

"The tariffs on special crops aren't large, but margins are tight, so their removal will make a difference and should encourage flow of these crops south," Govindasamy says. He also notes the high quality of Canadian crops weighs in their favor in export markets.

Both Govindasamy and Frank point to water shortages in the western U.S. and in Mexico as a reason alternate crops can expand in Alberta. Shortages, for example, have moved dairies out of California and into Oregon and Idaho where land and water are still available. "This reduces the land base for alternate crops," Frank notes.

In particular, water shortages in the western U.S. have reduced the viability of crops such as hay and mint. Both are grown in Alberta.

"Hay is already a major crop in Alberta, grown for domestic use and export. Mint is currently grown on several hundred acres in southern Alberta," notes Beata Lees, Alberta Agriculture special crops specialist.

Commodity price fluctuations and stricter environmental laws have also spurred the movement of crops into different regions. Frank saw evidence of the changing agricultural character during

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a recent tour through the Magic and Treasure Valleys of southern Idaho and the Willamette Valley in Oregon. Over 100 different commercial crops are grown in these valleys.

"Currently cotton enjoys good prices, so California cotton acres have increased at the expense of crops such as alfalfa seed, alfalfa hay and sugar beets. While these crops have moved into Idaho and Oregon, they also can move as far north as Alberta," says Frank.

Alfalfa seed is a good case in point. Non-dormant types are being tried in Idaho and Oregon. "If they catch on there, more acres of dormant types may be contracted in Alberta," he explains. He adds dry bean acres are also expanding in Alberta. Seed pea contracts have also increased significantly as companies seek to expand and diversify their acreages.

Turf grass seed production may also move north. Already production is expected to increase in the next few years. U.S. production is hampered by smoke pollution says Frank. "Field burning provides optimum pest control, but most U.S. fields are in valleys that suffer from poor air flow and temperature inversions. Serious smoke pollution has resulted in legislated burning restrictions."

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Plant spring bulbs now

You can add color to your spring by planting spring bulbs now says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Tulips, daffodils, crocus, grape hyacinth and scilla are among the commons bulbs Alberta gardeners use to herald spring," says Pam North of the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre.

These bulbs can be planted in September, or as soon as they appear in stores. "At the very latest, plant spring bulbs at least three weeks before the ground freezes as this allows the roots to establish," says North.

Success with your spring bulbs starts with making good choices when you buy them. Bulbs should be large and firm, with no signs of mold growth.

Second, choose the right location. Most locations around a yard are suitable, but good drainage is an important consideration. She recommends avoiding southern exposures near buildings. These areas warm up first in spring and can encourage early growth susceptible to late spring frosts.

Before planting bulbs, prepare the soil by digging at least 30 cm. Add 2.5 to five cm of peat moss and mix into the top 15 cm of the soil. Fertilize with 10-30-10, bone meal, or a bulb fertilizer such as 4-10-8. The fertilizer should be incorporated into the top 15 cm of the soil. If the area is dry, water after planting.

"How deep the bulbs should be planted depends on the bulb type," she says, and adds all the recommended depths are from the soil surface to the base of the bulb. Tulips should be planted at 20 cm, daffodils at 25 cm, and, scilla, crocus and grape hyacinth at 10 to 12 cm.

Mulching may be necessary in a warm, sunny location to keep the ground frozen and prevent early spring growth. North advises applying a six to eight cm mulch of peat or clean straw after the ground freezes.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Ag in classroom conference next month

With time ticking down to the start of the National Ag in the Classroom conference, organizers have opened their doors a little wider.

Agriculture and education students have been given an open—and free—ticket to attend the fourth national conference October 25 through 27 in Edmonton.

"The conference is about creating networks. We call the conference 'a co-operative learning experience for educators and the agriculture industry' in our brochure. The invitation to students looks at the future and maintaining those networks," says Betty Gabert, Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom co-ordinator and one of the conference organizers.

Students in both faculties at the University of Alberta were invited. They won't be charged a registration fee, but should bring a bag lunch or can buy meal tickets at the conference.

Conference registration has already come from across Canada as well as the U.S. Participants are offered a wide ranging program notes Gabert. "The idea behind—and the goal of—the conference is to facilitate—to bring together teachers and the agriculture industry, to show some of the available teacher resource material and for teachers to share with other teachers their Ag in the Classroom successes."

The conference program has ample time for teacher sharing. This includes a cross Canada check-up of the best ideas of 1992 and a showcase of co-operative efforts between teachers, institutions and industry.

An issues panel will look at current "hot" issues in agriculture and how teachers can provide balanced presentations. The two issues under discussion are free market and supply management, and conventional and organic farming.

One afternoon of the conference will be devoted to topics of interest to teachers or anyone interested in developing educational materials. Among the topics are harnessing volunteer power, successful fund raising, sustainable agriculture, Ontario teacher resources, Quebec action on agricultural awareness, Regina's Agribition and a special U.S. Ag in the Classroom project.

"We wouldn't have been able to provide such a diverse program without tremendous industry support," says Gabert. "Our

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sponsors have shown that agriculture values its connection to the classroom."

Major sponsors include the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Royal Bank, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), the Alberta Wheat Pool, Prairie Pools Inc., the Agricultural Ambassador Program, Alberta Education and Alberta Agriculture.

"We've also had enthusiastic support from other sectors of the agriculture industry, community and education institutions, and other provinces," she says. "They've sponsored speakers, delegates and meals, plus will have displays or provided organizational support."

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September 28, 1992

Frozen canola seed good pig feed

Crushers don't like frozen canola, but the frozen crop can be very useful for pig producers says an Alberta Agriculture regional swine specialist.

"Pig producers around the province have a real opportunity from the amount of frozen canola seed that may be available," says Marvin Salomons, the Red Deer-based specialist. "Reject canola seed can be a good source of high protein feed for pigs."

Early frosts across the province damaged many canola crops. Oil from frost-damaged immature canola seed has a high chlorophyll content. This makes the oil green and more costly to refine.

But the frost-damaged seed also contains between 18 and 20 per cent crude protein and 20 to 30 per cent oil. The percentages depend on the amount of frost damage. "For a pig producer, both the protein and oil are advantages in feeding," says Salomons. "Feeder pigs can easily digest protein from ground canola seed. The oil increases digestible energy and reduces the dustiness of the feed ration."

Feeder pigs, between 25 and 100 kg, can use up to 20 per cent frozen canola seed in their feed without affecting their performance he says. Sows shouldn't be fed frost-damaged canola seed he adds. "Limited research has shown negative results, so feeding to sows isn't currently recommended."

Canola seed must be ground before feeding. "This can present problems because the seed can contain up to 30 per cent oil. To prevent your hammermill screen from clogging, mix frost-damaged seed with equal parts barley before you put it through the mill."

Feeding frost-damaged canola seed can also lower the feed costs of pig rations Salomons adds. "On a tonne for tonne basis, the lower grade canola seed's value may be 20 to 50 per cent more than number one feed barley."

For more information on feeding frost-damaged canola seed, contact an Alberta Agriculture regional swine specialist.

Contact: *Marvin Salomons*
340-5336

Don't burn damaged crops!

The potential for serious erosion should be the greatest motivation a farmer can have not to burn a damaged crop says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Farmers are naturally concerned about managing high levels of crop residues from damaged crops, so they can have good seeding conditions next spring. Burning, however, should be absolutely the last method they consider," says John Timmermans, a soil conservation specialist.

Hail, frost and snow left many farmers with many acres of what would have been higher than average yielding crops. "Some of those crops aren't harvestable, because of yield loss and or severe lodging," says Timmermans. "But before you take the drastic action of burning, consider the possible consequences."

Controlled burning, or burning just swaths, will be difficult if not impossible he notes. "And, as a result, you'll get a black field in more ways than one. Without stubble, there will be no protection from wind or water erosion. Erosion, from just one season, can

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completely cancel out all the careful management practices of a decade."

Timmermans recommends cultivating damaged crops with a heavy duty tandem or offset disc. This is a much better long term investment in the soil and its quality he says. "After the crop dries, tillage should cut and incorporate even heavy crops or residues," he adds.

If, as a last resort, crops or residues will be burned, the burning should be controlled and done in the spring, not the fall. "Burning that leaves your entire field black shouldn't be considered a reasonable alternative," he stresses.

Timmermans also notes Soil Conservation Act and Forest and Prairie Protection Act by-laws require burning permits. Producers should call their local agricultural fieldman for municipal requirements.

A new brochure, "Stop Stubble Burning", is now available from Alberta Agriculture district offices and municipal agricultural fieldmen. The brochure, revised from a Manitoba publication on the same subject, looks at six reasons not to burn crop residues and also presents alternatives.

Contact: John Timmermans
948-8539

Automated milk collection system field tested

Accuracy and reliability are the key concerns of a new automated milk collection system currently being tested in Alberta.

"We're evaluating this state-of-the-art system to see if there's a better way to measure volume and collect samples when milk is picked up at dairy farms," says Ray Grapentine, milk management specialist with Alberta Agriculture's dairy production branch. The field test is part of a national project, co-ordinated by the dairy production branch for a national milk products quality committee.

Every time a dairy farmer's bulk tank is emptied, the volume of milk is measured and a milk sample taken. Right now the system is mostly manual. Drivers take milk samples and measure tank volume with a dipstick before loading.

The automated system has an in-line milk sampling device and a magnetic volume meter. Samples are taken as the milk is pumped. At the same time, the meter measures the milk as it is pumped from the farm tank into the bulk tank. A computer controls the system and records all this data.

One of the advantages of this system is its computer says Grapentine. It records all the information needed by producers and processors to make a milk sale. After each milk pick-up, it prints a receipt. This receipt is a permanent record for the producer. As well, at the end of the day, information from all the route pick-ups can be transferred electronically to the milk processing plant.

"Our field tests will help us determine if we can better collect the information needed to sell milk," says Grapentine. "On the surface, computer automation looks like it could be more accurate, but we need to see if the information is reliable. So, we're testing how this collection system works in a variety of weather and operating conditions." The field tests began in June and will run through mid-December.

So far, the milk meter seems to work well notes Grapentine. "It has been impressive, but accuracy suffers when there's a leak in the system's valves, gaskets or connections."

The automated samples are being compared to manual samples he adds. Some variation has been noted, and is being investigated. Two automatic samplers were tested at Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing and Development Centre in Leduc before field testing started. Lab test results for the automatic and manual samples were nearly identical.

The centre also thoroughly pre-tested four complete systems. Then, one of the automated collection systems was installed on a Dairy World bulk milk truck in the Edmonton area.

Two more systems might hit the road before the testing period ends in December says Grapentine. He adds a final report on the field test is expected by the end of March.

Contact: Ray Grapentine
361-1223

Keep fire extinguishers ready, handy

Jokes about bad cooking aside, the kitchen is only one of the places you should have a fire extinguisher says an Alberta Agriculture farm safety specialist.

"We recommend you keep at least two fire extinguishers in your home," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, the farm safety program manager. "One in the kitchen and one near your main entrance. Most farm fire deaths and injuries are in the home, so extinguishers are one way of being prepared."

Kyeremanteng also reminds farm families they should have fire extinguishers within easy reach in their combine, grain truck and other farm vehicles and machinery. Ten pound, multiple purpose dry chemical extinguishers are recommended. Extinguishers should be Canadian Standard Approved (CSA) he adds.

Machinery fires were the most common type of fires on Alberta farms during the 1980s. Nearly 1,000 were recorded between 1980 and 1989. Another 312 occured in trucks. These statistics were compiled by Alberta Labour's fire prevention branch.

Alberta Agriculture also recommends fire extinguishers be placed in other locations around the farm yard. A shop should have at least two. One near the entrance and another near a shop bench where, for example, a farmer welds.

Barns should have a fire extinguisher near each entrance. "The preferred location is outside the building," he notes.

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All of the family should know how to operate fire extinguishers he says. Extinguishers should also be checked annually and refitted as necessary.

"An extinguisher can only deal with a spot, or small fire," he cautions. "Do leave the building or vehicle as quickly as possible and get help."

Alberta Agriculture has a farm fire prevention checklist available from the farm safety program office in Edmonton. "It can be used to check on your fire readiness," he says.

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

Farm family spending habits tracked

Some describe it as a constant trickle, others make offerings into a bottomless pit and a smattering have every penny earmarked. System or not, about 200 Alberta farm families learned more about their own family living expenses through a farm family expenditure (Famex) study.

"Preliminary results from Famex'91 show spending patterns are about the same as two previous studies," says Jean Wilson, an Alberta Agriculture family resource management specialist. Similar spending studies were run in 1986 and 1987.

In 1991, the largest living expense was food at home, at 23 per cent of the total. The next largest categories were transportation—13 per cent—and shelter at 11 per cent.The average farm family spent $2,035 to live each month in 1991. Add savings, taxes and donations, and the total grows to $2,750. In 1987, this total was $2,300 and in 1986, $2,142..

Wilson says the study also has value as an educational tool for its participants. "The first-time record keepers, especially, find tracking their living expenses a useful experience. One participant described it as 'fascinating to find out where our money goes'.

"Other study participants say this sort of record keeping gives them a sense of control," Wilson adds. "They say looking at how much they spend on shelter, transportation, recreation and other living expenses helps them to make more realistic financial decisions and long term plans."

The Famex'91 families averaged 4.25 people and had been farming for 14 years. They kept track of 13 different living expenses as well as their taxes, donations and savings. Living expenses included food at home, meals out, clothing, shelter, household operations, household furnishings, transportation, medical, personal, recreational, education, child care, tobacco/alcohol and miscellaneous spending.

The Famex'91 study was funded through the Farming for the Future research program as an on-farm demonstration project. "District home economists across the province worked with the farm families on the project," Wilson says.

Final results from the study should be available in October Wilson notes.

Contact: Jean Wilson
427-2412

Agri-News briefs

Livestock stress seminar October 7

A unique method of working livestock will be featured at a seminar October 7 at the Highwood Livestock Auction. Sponsored by the Foothills Forage Co-op Association, the half-day seminar on how to work livestock with less stress will be led by Bud Williams. Williams' reputation is based on bringing in the "ones that got away." He has worked with cattle from Central America to Alaska and is now based in Lloydminster. The seminar begins at 11 a.m. A sponsor-an-employee registration rate is available. To reserve a place at the seminar telephone 541-0911 or FAX 541-0915. For more information, contact Isabel McPherson at 541-0911, or Glen Morrison at 652-7897.

Conservation 2000 symposiums coming in early November

Conservation 2000 will hold four symposiums around Alberta in early November. Each program will feature the same keynote speaker, Bill Hamm of Monsanto's research farm in Lethbridge Hamm will look at weed control problems in minimum conservation tillage systems. As well, "Creatures of Habit", a soil conservation play, will be performed at each of the symposiums Symposium dates, locations and contacts are: November 3. The Barn, Lethbridge Community College, Jim Hahn at 382-3406; November 4, The Drumheller Inn, JoAnne Meents (Calgary) at 290-4648; November 5, The Norseman Inn, Camrose, Brian Fuller at 672-5772; and, November 6, Sexsmith, Gerald Rutberg (Grande Prairie) at 538-0144.

Agriculture conference for Small Business Week

The Edmonton Chamber of Commerce and the Alberta Institute of Agrologists (Edmonton branch) have jointly organized a half day agriculture conference for October 30. The morning conference is part of Edmonton Small Business Week activities. Billed as an opportunity for urban business people to better understand and appreciate the importance of agriculture, the seminar will look at current issues and opportunities in the industry. Ben McEwen, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister, will be the keynote speaker. Among the other speakers are: Ed Schultz, general manager of the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation; Hartman Nagel, Unifarm president; Gary Haley, chairman of Canada West Trading; Doug Horner, manager of Westglen Milling; and, Jim Waters, Canada Safeway public affairs vice-president. For more information, contact Jean Crepin at 438-5522, or Ed Schultz at 474-8288.

Late harvest postpones Outstanding Young Farmer event

A late harvest in most of Canada has delayed the Outstanding Young Farmer award program finale. The national event has been postponed from early October to late November. The event will still be held in Regina, but now will run from November 25 to 29 in conjunction with the Canadian Western Agribition. "We're disappointed to have to move it," says Tim Duffin, the program chair. "But there's still a crop to be harvested in many areas of Canada and our eight farm couples were feeling undue pressure from the original early October schedule." During the four day event, regional honorees will be interviewed by a judging selection team. Three winners will receive Motherwell Awards as Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers. The Outstanding Young Farmer program is operated by the Jaycees and sponsored by John Deere. The national program is designed to recognize farmers between the ages of 18 and 39 who exemplify exceptional achievement in production, marketing, conservation and community leadership. As well, the program promotes greater urban awareness of the importance of agriculture in the Canadian economy. For more information, contact Duffin in Calgary at 263-3385, or Kim McConnell, promotions chair, at 299-2699.

Alberta branch of water resources association meets Oct.5-7

The Alberta branch of the Canadian Water Resources Association will hold its annual conference October 5 through 7 in Lethbridge. The conference theme is water use challenges. Speakers will explore a number of water use issues and management challenges facing government, industry and individuals. For more information, contact Sharon Ouwerkerk in Lethbridge at 329-1344, or FAX 327-6847.

Building wetlands video

There's no mystery about who will come in a new video available for loan through Alberta Agriculture. "If you build it" (304-6 VT) is a production of Ducks Unlimited. The "it" in the video's title is wetland habitat. A trio of Alberta teenagers receive the message about building wetlands in the style of "Field of Dreams". They learn about wetlands as they visit projects in Brooks, Stettler and the Peace region. The fast-moving and upbeat production was produced to match Alberta grade eight science curriculum. The 21-minute video is available for loan from all Alberta Agriculture district video libraries. It's also available by writing the department's central Film Library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Phone (403) 427

AGRI-NEWS

October 5, 1992

Farmers support dual barley marketing system report says

An Angus Reid report, commissioned by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Barley Commission, indicates Alberta farmers would like to see less Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) control over barley marketing.

A dual marketing system for barley was supported by 62 per cent of surveyed farmers. An overwhelming majority—85 per cent—also feel the decision about which marketing system to use should belong to producers, not government. A total of 721 farmers were surveyed.

"The results indicate that producers want to play a more active role in marketing their barley. They want less government control, fewer regulations. This report simply confirms what we've been saying all along," says Ernie Isley, Alberta's agriculture minister.Isley released the report during a recent trip to Toronto where he spoke to representatives of the Ontarioagriculture and food industry.

The CWB buys and sells all malt and feed barley for export. Participants in the survey were asked if they would prefer a dual system giving farmers a choice between continuing to market their barley through the CWB, or marketing their barley on their own.

"These results come as no surprise," says Isley. "Farmers are obviously confident in their product and their ability to compete in a less regulated system."

Isley says he intends to share these results with his federal and provincial counterparts. He will urge the industry to pursue their preferred options over the next few months.

One option is in "A proposal for a North American continental market for barley". The proposal was released by Alberta Agriculture earlier this year. A variation on the dual market concept, the proposal would expand producers' ability to market barley within North America. The CWB would retain exclusive control of off-continent exports.

Copies of the Angus Reid report and the continental barley proposal are available through Alberta Agriculture's planning secretariat. You can call the secretariat in Edmonton at 427-2417. That number is toll-free in Alberta through the government RITE system.

Contact: *Ken Beswick*
427-2417

Agriculture minister leads trade mission to Far East

Alberta's agriculture minister is currently on a two week trade mission to Japan, China and Hong Kong.

The mission, with an aim to expand and diversify Alberta markets, is Ernie Isley's first to Asia.

In Japan, the trade delegation, met with private sector investors, importers and distributors in Tokyo, Sendai and Osaka regions. These areas have been designated priority markets for Alberta products. The minister also met with Japanese government officials to discuss trade liberalization and future trade opportunities.

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AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Isley was on hand to support a major Japanese restaurant chain's Canadian beef promotion. The promotion involves the Canada Beef Export Federation. Alberta exporters and processors were on hand as Isley visited special promotions at leading Japanese retailers who feature Alberta products.

The Chinese leg of the mission will explore opportunities for trade and co-operation. In Beijing, the trade delegation will meet with Chinese agricultural officials to evaluate joint projects in northern China. Alberta Agriculture will also make a presentation on Alberta's beef industry. China's interest in using Alberta as a model for developing its beef industry has stimulated imports of Alberta forage seeds, livestock genetics and other related services. More sales are expected from continued co-operation.

Meetings with the Heilongjiang provincial government and People's Congress will also reaffirm Alberta's twin relationship with Heilongjiang. Last year the agreement celebrated its 10th anniversary. Isley will also sign a three-year co-operation agreement to help improve Heilongjiang's pastureland and provide more trade opportunities for Alberta's private sector.

In Hong Kong, Isley and the trade delegation will meet Alberta food importers. As Hong Kong imports over 90 per cent of its food, the market holds significant opportunity for Alberta's agri-food industry.

Accompanying Isley on the trade mission are: Robert "Butch" Fischer, Wainwright MLA and a member of the agriculture and rural affairs caucus; Barry Mehr, Alberta Agriculture assistant deputy minister; and, Brad Klak, Isley's executive assistant. The Minister's delegation was joined in China by an Alberta Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs official and representatives of the Alberta Hong Kong office and the Canadian Embassy in Beijing. Alberta's livestock genetic and management service sector was also represented.

Currently, 40 per cent of Alberta's foreign exports go to the Asia-Pacific region.

Primary agriculture is worth about $4 billion annually in Alberta. The value-added sector sells more than $5 billion. Those totals are expected to double in the next decade with sufficient market development.

Contact: Brad Klak
427-2137
David Wong
427-4241

Barry MehrDavid Wong
427-2442

Help create tomorrow

All Albertans are invited to help create tomorrow in the province's agriculture and food industry through a series of 11 consultation meetings.

The series, billed as "Creating Tomorrow", will start in Vulcan on October 15 and end in Calgary on November 13. Each meeting is planned by a group of local community leaders with assistance from Alberta Agriculture.

"The process started with a discussion paper released last May. This fall, we hope Albertans from inside and outside the industry will come out to consider and describe a desired future for the agriculture and food economy--where they think the industry should go in the next 15 years. Equally important is to share ideas about how to move in those directions," says Ben McEwen, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister.

The discussion paper, titled "Creating Tomorrow: A vision of Alberta's agriculture and food industry", came from an industry advisory group and the department's strategic management committee. The 14 member advisory group represents a cross section of the agriculture and food industry. For a copy of this paper, contact the department's planning secretariat in Edmonton at 427-2417 (toll-free through the government RITE line).

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley or Associate Minister Shirley McClellan will attend each meeting. As well, representatives of the initial industry advisory group will be on hand to listen to the discussion and ideas.

"All of the proposals, suggestions, opinions and other thoughts from the meetings will be brought to a final government and industry strategy planning conference," says Ken Beswick, chair of Alberta Agriculture's planning secretariat. That conference is scheduled for early 1993.

Creating Tomorrow meetings will be in the following communities: Vulcan October 15; Bow Island October 20; Olds October 22; Wainwright October 28; Glendon October 30; Barrhead November 2; Fairview November 4; Fort Vermilion November 6; Edmonton November 9; Hanna November 10; and, Calgary November 13. For more information, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Contact: Ken Beswick
427-2417

Barb Stroh
427-2417

Salinity service celebrates 10th anniversary

For the last 10 years the Dryland Salinity Investigation Service has helped Alberta farmers battle white, unproductive patches in their fields.

"We can look back over the last decade with a lot of satisfaction," says Don Wentz, provincial soil salinity specialist. "The program started a new direction in salinity control."

Research done in Montana in the 1970s contributed to the program's design says Wentz. There, a large saline seep was reclaimed with alfalfa. Alfalfa was also the control recommended when the Alberta salinity program was stared in 1982 by Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Environment and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA).

The Dryland Salinity Investigation program helps producers in several ways. The service identifies the type of saline seep and its recharge area. Control and reclamation methods are recommended. Technical support includes helping start controls

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and monitoring results.

Today there are over 360 farmers, more than 400 projects, over 12,000 acres of recharge and more than 6,000 saline acres in the program. "And, the control implementation rate is better than 66 per cent," Wentz adds.

Producer progress since 1982 is also being followed up. "Results are verifying that forages are effective in lowering water tables and stopping or reducing the flow of saline groundwater to saline seeps. Places were fields were white and unproductive are now producing healthy forage crops."

One of the most dramatic changes is at a Warner area project where alfalfa was planted in the recharge area. "It's improved enough the farmer has planted cereal crops into the saline seep," says Wentz.

Saline seeps occur naturally on the Canadian prairies. They take several years to develop. In the most common type, water tables build up in a recharge area and salts collect in a discharge area or seep. Potential recharge areas include sloughs, pot holes, large summerfallow fields, water courses, draws and borrow pits.

When the water table reaches a saturation point in a recharge area, it has to move. The natural movement is down slope. As it moves, it dissolves soluble salts found in the soil and carries them along. If the water comes to the surface, the sun can evaporate the water leaving the salts behind. Over time, the salt level becomes so high in this discharge area that plant growth is limited.

Planting alfalfa in recharge areas is recommended. Alfalfa's long roots, often over 20 feet, use up the excess groundwater. When the water table drops, the saline seep process stops.

There are other types of saline seeps. Their recharge area comes from a deep artesian water flow. "These seeps are difficult to control and often impossible to reclaim," he notes. "This is why it is important to identify saline seeps and recharge areas, so you can take the right steps in control and reclamation."

"If you have a salinity problem that's expanding or you need help to control a salinity problem, the Dryland Salinity Investigation Service can help," says Wentz. For more information, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist, municipal agricultural fieldman, or Darryl Mann, co-ordinator of the Dryland Salinity Control Association, at 381-5467.

Contact: Don Wentz
381-5467

New tool for salinity mapping

Soil salinity mapping has become much easier by combining electromagnetics, a portable computer, an all-terrain vehicle and a PVC sled.

"Field scale mapping used to be a labor intensive, time consuming process," says Don Wentz, Alberta Agriculture's provincial soil salinity specialist. "We needed three or more days to map a quarter section. Now an electronic system can map a quarter section in about four hours."

The basis of the system is the EM-38, a electrical conductivity meter developed by an Ontario company. Added to it, is a computer system that can read the meter's data and make a field map. Because the EM-38 is sensitive to metals, it's mounted on a sled made from a type of plastic—polyvinyl chloride (PVC)—pipe. The sled is pulled by an all-terrain vehicle.

A number of partners developed the complete automated salinity mapping system says Wentz. They include Alberta Agriculture, the Univeristy of Alberta, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and private sector computer companies.

Besides the speed and time saved, the automated mapping system has other benefits says Wentz. Accuracy is one advantage. "Not only can we get a better inventory of where salinity is a problem, farmers can also get a very accurate picture of where they have saline seeps and potential areas on the fringe of current seeps.

"Farmers also get a double whammy of information. The two or three dimensional maps from the EM-38, plus air photos really show up their salinity problem."

The system may also help researchers learn more about soil salinity. "We may be able to come up with a better definition, find out how saline areas expand and what affect major events such as extra precipitation might have," he says.

The County of Warner is currently field testing their EM-38 with the new system. Wentz says he hopes other municipalities with EM-38s will pick up this method of salinity testing and use it when salinity investigations are requested.

Interest in the automated mapping systems from municipalities will also help complete an inventory of Alberta's saline acres more quickly Wentz adds. "It makes the team bigger and spreads the workload around. There's not a big window of time when this mapping can be done, a couple of weeks in the spring and a month in the fall if the weather is good."

Contact: Don Wentz
381-5467

Fall pest invasion heads indoors

Cool fall temperatures often bring unwelcome insect visitors into your home says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"A few of them are looking for food, but most are simply looking for a warm, sheltered place to overwinter in. Some even come in by mistake. Some may get trapped inside while trying to go through rather than around the house," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre. "The most common invaders are strawberry root weevils, boxelder bugs, crickets and houseflies."

"Mostly they are a nuisance, but also can do damage, from staining walls to eating cloth and paper," she adds. "Control methods also vary."

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In most cases, insect invasions can be prevented by sealing cracks and crevices around doors and windows and tightening loose trim around doors. Once insects are found indoors, a broom or vacuum cleaner usually can clear up a problem. Other methods depend on the insect.

Houseflies are the easiest to recognize. "And they seem to come in the house every time the door opens," Barkley says. "Their buzz is annoying. Their droppings make a mess of curtains, windows and walls. Plus, they like to land on food."

Sticky fly paper, a fly swatter and a dichlorvos (vapona) strip work on houseflies indoors.

Strawberry root weevils are harmless because they don't feed indoors. They can be recognized by distinctive elongated heads much thinner than their bodies, a blunt snout, humpback, dark brown to black color and are about six mm long.

Both strawberry root weevils and field crickets can be controlled by spraying house foundations and a metre wide strip around the house with diazinon.

Black or camel crickets can wander into houses. "Some people find their chirping noise irritating," notes Barkley. "They can also damage cloth or paper products."

Boxelder bugs can also be controlled by spraying your house foundation and a strip around the outside of the house. Barkley suggests using carbaryl. Boxelder bugs are flat, 12 to 14 mm long, dark grey to black with three distinct red lines behind the head and red lines on the wings, and have red abdomens and red under wings.

"These bugs won't bite humans or pets and don't feed on anything in the house. However, they can leave stains on your walls and curtains," she says.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

Agri-News briefs

Barley Commission calls for director nominations

The Alberta Barley Commission is accepting nominations for regional directors and directors-at-large. Nominations for six regional directors must be received by 4:30 p.m. on October 9. Nominations for directors-at-large will be accepted until November 20. Nominees must be eligible Alberta barley producers. If nominated for a regional director, they must farm in that region. Nomination forms are available from the Commission office. You can call the office toll-free, at 1-800-265-9111. All the directors will be elected at the commission's annual meeting in Red Deer on December 2. For more information, contact the Alberta Barley Commission at 1-800-265-9111.

Two-part herb gardening short course

Learn more about herbs and herb gardening at a two-part, hands-on short course offered by the University of Alberta's faculty of extension. The first—harvesting, processing and using herbs—runs all day October 17. Growing your own winter herb garden is the second course. The morning course is scheduled for November 7. Both courses will be held in Sherwood Park. Lynn Dennis, a professional horticulturist, is the instructor. Space in both courses is limited. To register, or for more information, call the University Extension Centre at 492-3029.

Cattle commission launches environmental award

The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) has established a new award to recognize the contribution cattle producers make to the environment. The first annual Environmental Stewardship Award will be presented at the commission's annual general meeting in Calgary in December. The award will recognize cattle producers whose natural resource management practices enhance the environment and improve the wildlife habitat. "Cattle producers care about the environment and are voluntarily changing production practices to make their operations increasingly environmentally sustainable," says Margaret Jenson, ACC producer liaison chair. "The Environmental Stewardship Award was created to publicly recognize some of the individuals who are doing an excellent job of protecting and enhancing the environment." The 1992 winner will receive a commemorative plaque and an all expenses paid trip for two from anywhere in Alberta to the commission's annual general meeting December 7 through 9. For more information, contact Jenson in Tees at 788-2474, or Joanne Lemke with the ACC in Calgary at 275-4400.

Peace Farm Women's Conference celebrates 15th anniversary

The Peace region Farm Women's Conference will celebrate its 15th anniversary in Fairview November 19 and 20. Keynote speaker, Brenda Robinson, will open the conference by discussing its theme, "a time of change: our family, our farm, our future". Select-a-sessions cover a wide range of general interest and educational topics. Among the subjects are green gardening, promoting agriculture, entertaining with Alberta Made products, cattle midwifery and farming with your in-laws. Rose Bibby, known as the Hayshaker's Wife, will close the conference. Contact any Peace region district home economist to register for the conference. Or, for more information, contact Marguerite Thiessen in Manning at 836-3351, or Carmen Andrew in Valleyview at 524-3301.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

October 12, 1992

Lower dollar good for livestock markets

A lower Canadian dollar was good news for livestock markets in September say Alberta Agriculture market analysts.

"The sliding Canadian dollar was positive for cattle, hog and lamb markets, and the movement of the dollar will continue to be a factor in those markets," says Ron Gietz.

Early September's sudden drop in the Canada/U.S. exchange rate was beneficial to Alberta cattle prices. Fed cattle prices moved higher with the joint effect of the lower dollar and higher U.S. prices. By mid-month slaughter steer and heifer prices were eight to nine dollars above their year-ago levels.

"The slide was also significant because it ended a six month holding pattern in the exchange rate," says Gietz. The Canadian dollar dropped below 80 cents U.S. toward the end of September. "With the current climate of political and economic uncertainty, both in North America and Europe, exchange rates could be in for further volatility."

Gietz based a mid-September forecast of Alberta Direct Steer prices on a 82 cent Canadian dollar. His prediction was for average slaughter steer prices at $82/cwt. for October and November. "Fluctuations in the dollar will affect those prices," he says.

The best news for Canadian slaughter hog markets during September was also the weaker dollar Gietz adds. "A much weaker dollar—compared to 1991—should prevent local prices from dropping to last fall's levels, and that's despite record, large fourth quarter pork production expected in the U.S."

The same is true in lamb markets says Jo Ann Sandhu. "The most significant trend in lamb markets was the decline in the Canadian dollar relative to U.S. currency."

Contact:	*Ron Gietz*	*Jo Ann Sandhu*
	427-5376	*427-5387*

Safety first important for older farmers

Death and injury are a more permanent stopper than the weather in the hurry to finish harvest.

"There's always tomorrow, as long as you're alive," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program. "Don't push yourself too hard or too long, because there can be very serious consequences."

That's a particularly important message for older farmers he adds. "So far in 1992, half of Alberta farm fatalities have been people over 60 years old." Preliminary statistics to September 19 show 10 farm deaths in Alberta, six of those victims were age 59 and over. In the most recent, a 74-year old Milk River farmer died while trying to unplug a swather.

Kyeremanteng says three reasons could explain those numbers. "The first factor is just aging. The older you get, the slower your reflexes. Your dexterity isn't as great. Balance, eyesight and hearing all are affected."

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Alberta AGRICULTURE

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Economics may also be a factor. "Some older farmers may be coming out of retirement to help out because there aren't the dollars to hire help." Unusual weather can also take a toll he says. "The weather always forces people to hurry, but because this crop year has been so unpredictable, I think people are more inclined to race the weather."

Getting rest at night, taking breaks through the day and eating properly are important for all age groups Kyeremanteng says. "As well, older farmers need to recognize their physical limitations and make adjustments. And, of course, there's no substitute for taking safety precautions, particularly turning off a machine before making any repairs."

Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
427-2186

Alberta Agriculture researcher finalist for provincial award

An Alberta Agriculture grain researcher is a finalist for a provincial science and technology award.

Jim Helm is one of three finalists for an innovation in Alberta technology award, one of nine categories in the 1992 Alberta Science and Technology Leadership (ASTech) Awards.

The ASTechs, established in 1990, recognize and honor individuals, businesses or institutions who have made significant contributions to the province's science and technology community. Presentations will be made in Edmonton on October 23.

Currently Helm heads the department's Field Crops Development Centre research section. The centre, formerly the field crops branch, is in Lacombe. Helm started the feed grain breeding program there nearly 20 years ago. Since then, the Alberta Agriculture crop research program has become known internationally for its basic research and its release of eight barley and two triticale cultivars.

Barley is big business in Alberta. The province produces the most barley in Canada, about 5.7 million tonnes every year with an estimated farm gate value of $460 million. Helm's nomination acknowledged that fact and his contribution by saying: "As a result of Dr. Helm's work, the agricultural industry in Alberta has some of the best feed barley varieties in the world".

Breeding new crop varieties takes a long time and a lot of teamwork. The research team includes 16 scientists and technicians. "Jim's leadership in working with a dedicated group of research scientists and technicians has resulted in a highly productive and valuable program aimed at enhancing Alberta's feed grain and livestock industries," says Don Macyk, director of Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division.

Helm has registered two types of barley: Samson and Condor. Condor, a hulless variety, may be the most significant says Macyk. Helm combined three quality traits in Condor and created the first high yielding, hulless barley variety with a high lysine content.

"Condor's characteristics make it a good replacement for wheat and corn in swine and poultry rations. The yearly economic benefit of this variety is estimated at around $22 million. That's in saved production costs for swine and poultry farmers and increased output for barley producers," says Macyk.

"New varieties developed from the Condor line will play a long term role in improving the competitiveness of our livestock feeding industry," he adds. "This includes the HB501 cultivar released this year."

While still involved with breeding better barley, Helm's work has grown. Along with his colleagues, he's involved in breeding triticale and winter wheat. "As his nomination noted, his knowledge and innovations can be extended to breeding other cereals and forage crops. So, his contribution goes beyond his own work," says Macyk.

Helm's work is one example of the valuable research and development undertaken by Alberta Agriculture and the value that research has for the agriculture industry. In the plant industry division alone, over $7 million is spent annually on research and development and related scientific activity. The department's total is close to $18 million.

Alberta Agriculture is just one partner in agri-food research and development activity in the province. The total provincial government contribution is about 35 per cent of all agri-food research; federal sources make up 37 per cent, academic institutions another 21 per cent and the private sector seven per cent.

"Agri-food research is important to the future competitiveness of the industry, especially in a global sense," says Ralph Christian, executive director of the Alberta Agriculture Research Institute. "And, as Alberta is one of Canada's major agriculture producers, our research and development not only supports the province's farmers, but makes a national contribution."

Research and development investment has a definite return he adds. For example, it's estimated the $65 million put into Farming for the Future in its first 14 years will return $938 million to the Alberta economy over the next 25 years. Farming for the Future is Alberta's largest agricultural research funding program. It's financed by the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

Contact: Don Macyk 427-5341
Dr. Ralph Christian 422-1072
Brian Hetherington
ASTech awards, 428-6459

Land lease and rental rates survey released

Alberta cropland lease rates increased by just over one per cent in 1992 says an Alberta Agriculture financial management specialist.

"The survey shows that cash rental rates have decreased marginally in the northern regions of Alberta, increased slightly in

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central Alberta and remained unchanged in southern Alberta," says David Thacker of the farm business management branch in Olds. "The net effect was a 1.15 per cent overall increase."

The final results of the 1992 crop and pastureland lease and rental rates survey have just been released by Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch. The report contains actual crop and pastureland rental rates, as well as rates for provincial grazing reserves and crown land. It also includes information on the location, soil type, lease length, acres rented, pasture type and other details.

This information is particularly helpful for budgeting next year's production costs Thacker says. "The survey reports actual rates charged in the spring of 1992, organized by region and county. Farmers can use these figures as a starting point for their 1993 financial plans and for negotiating new lease arrangements."

Rental rates for pastureland didn't fall along with the cropland. "Pastureland rental rates have pretty much stayed even with 1991 across the province. Provincial grazing reserve rates didn't change much either, aside from small increases in grazing charges for sheep on Lethbridge area reserves," he adds.

Nearly three quarters (72 per cent) of the 434 cropland leases in the 1992 survey were cash leases. Twenty-five per cent were crop share and the remaining three per cent classified as other. This usually is a flexible cash-plus lease, or delivery of a fixed quantity of the crop.

In 1992, the most common crop share agreement was a 1/3 to landlord and 2/3 to tenant arrangement, with many different variations on which expenses the landlord covered. Of all the cropland leases, 70 per cent of the agreements were written, while 30 per cent were verbal.

The length of lease agreements ranged from one to 10 years; 53 per cent for one year, two per cent for two years, 28 per cent for three years and 17 per cent for more than three years. Seven per cent of the leases were reported as being for an open term.

Copies of the survey report may be requested from the Farm Business Management Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0, or from the Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 3rd Floor, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: David Thacker
556-4247

Sheep seminars look at grading, behavior and forestry

Three concerns of Alberta producers are on the agenda at a series of sheep seminars coming in mid-November.

The seminars—in Cardston on November 16, Millarville on November 17 and Nisku on November 19—feature the same speakers. "All three seminars will deal with Canada's lamb classification system, sheep behavior and forestry grazing," says Wray Whitmore, provincial sheep specialist based in Edmonton.

Ray Fielding, general manager of Canada West Food, and Tom Coupland, an Agriculture Canada meat grader from Red Deer will discuss the lamb classification system. A new system is expected to take effect in late fall or early winter.

Animal behaviorist Joe Stookey's presentation is on animal welfare and sheep behavior. Stookey is currently based at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon. "While much of Dr. Stookey's current work is with swine, he does have sheep in his background," notes Whitmore. "He worked five years with the sheep unit at the University of Illinois.

"Using sheep in forestry projects is currently of great interest in the industry. Our third seminar speaker will talk about reforestation from the forester's perspective to help sheep producers understand how sheep fit in," he says. Rod Negrave, with the British Columbia Ministry of Forests, will be the speaker.

Cardston and Leduc "sheep nights" have identical programs. Both will be held in the evening beginning at 7 p.m. An afternoon Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission zone meeting will precede the Cardston seminar.

The Millarville "lamb day" has a longer program. It will begin at 2 p.m. and feature an extra speaker as well as a lamb dinner. Murray Anderson will discuss public land issues facing Alberta livestock producers. Anderson is a range manager for Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. He is based in Edmonton.

For more information on the seminars contact Whitmore in Edmonton, Kim Stanford in Lethbridge at 382-5150, or the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

Alberta Agriculture co-sponsors the seminars with the Alberta Sheep Breeders Association.

Contact: Wray Whitmore Kim Stanford
427-5083 382-5150

Sixth annual hort congress November 5-7

Current issues for beginners to established horticulture growers are offered at the Alberta Horticultural Congress and Trade Show'92 from November 5 through 7 in Edmonton.

"The technical sessions cover a diverse range of subjects," says congress co-ordinator Simone Demers Collins. "As well, there are more opportunities than ever before for growers to talk with each other and with the speakers."

Some of the subjects include starting a greenhouse from the bottom up, new concepts in orchard sprayer design and application, beneficial insects in cole crop and potato management, environmentally friendly greenhouse practices, computerizing vegetable production and up and coming greenhouse crops. Three panels will also look at labour, storage and marketing issues notes Demers Collins.

Two international speakers headline the many experts who will share their knowledge and skills at the congress. John Green is

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the owner/operator of Greens of Soham in England and Wil Carlson is a professor and extension specialist at Michigan State University.

Green will provide the congress' keynote address. His topic is "from small beginnings". "It's a subject he's well acquainted with," says Demers Collins.

Green, and his brother Andrew, started their business in 1965 even though they didn't have any land. Today, they farm 7,500 acres with four subsidiary farming companies, their on-farm vegetable storage capacity is more than 29,000 tonnes and their sales total over $15 million annually.

In addition, Green will discuss the English-European initiative to help reconstruct the Russian food chain. He'll also participate in labor and marketing panels.

Carlson, whose information on flowering plant care is read and followed by over 30 million people every year, will make two presentations. In "making money providing quality bedding plants", he'll discuss the latest research information from his university plus how growers can use that information to make their businesses more profitable.

"Dr. Carlson has a formula for success—quality production plusgood marketing equal profitability," notes Demers Collins.

As well, Carlson will discuss how people, not plants, may be the problem in your business. "Growing plants is just the start. He'll show how knowing how to work with and for people is the bigger challenge," she says.

The sixth annual congress will also feature an extensive trade show. The trade show opens Thursday at 4 p.m. and then at 10 a.m. for the two remaining days. The congress and trade show are at the Coast Terrace Inn and the Convention Inn.

For the first time congress tours will run both at its beginning and its end. Three tours are scheduled. One goes to two area greenhouses, another to Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc and the third to Imperial Oil's fertilizer plant near Redwater.

The congress is sponsored by five associations: the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board, the Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association; the Alberta Market Gardeners Association, Flowers Canada (Alberta region) and the Fruit Growers Society of Alberta. Each of the associations hold director or annual meetings in conjunction with the congress.

Contact: Simone Demers Collins
427-7366

Agri-News briefs

World wheat markets extremely competitive

Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) asking prices have increased by $40 to $60 per tonne since the end of July, but world prices are forecast to remain at levels similar to 1991-92 says Larry Ruud, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. The announcement of a continued U.S. Export Enhancement Program (EEP) is one reason for the extremely competitive world market. President George Bush announced the U.S. could target about 29 million tonnes of wheat in EEP. Ruud says another complication in the Canadian price picture comes from weather damage to Prairie crops. Increased feed wheat supplies are forecast along with tight quotas for lower grade wheat. "Higher grade wheats—number one and two—will be easy to move, but marketing lower grades will be a challenge," says Ruud. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Fall soil testing still recommended

Farmers should always consider fall soil testing a good practice says an Alberta Agriculture specialist. "Whatever this year's crop season brought you—from drought conditions to extra residues—fall soil testing is a good idea so you can plan your fertilizer use wisely," says Len Kryzanowski, an agronomist with the soils and crop management branch. Soil sampling probes are available through Alberta Agriculture district offices as well as farm supply dealers. Most fertilizer dealers will also do custom sampling. Fallow and irrigated stubble fields should be sampled in the late fall—after mid-October and just before freeze-up. Non-irrigated stubble and established forage crop fields can be sampled as early as mid-September. Frozen and waterlogged soils shouldn't be sampled. Soil test reports provide information on nutrients including nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur as well as soil pH, salinity, texture and free lime. "This information can help you with fertilizer decisions and dealing with any soil problems," he says. Soil samples can be sent to private laboratories or to the Alberta Agriculture Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory in Edmonton. For a fast return of soil test results, producers should consider using a private lab he says. For more information on soil testing, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office, or Kryzanowski in Edmonton at 427-6361.

Soil sampling, fall fertilizing don't have to conflict

Timing of soil sampling and fall fertilizer application need not conflict says an Alberta Agriculture specialist. "Ideally, a producer would like to have soil test results and recommendations before applying fall fertilizer," says crop nutrition agronomist Len Kryzanowski. "But this may not work out." A producer should proceed with a fall fertilizer application as normal, but also take a soil sample just prior to applying fertilizer. "This will tell you if you need any additional nutrients that can be applied later, or in the spring prior to seeding," he says. Usually, producers who have a good crop production and fertilizer use history will know roughly the amount of fertilizer they require. In general, a good crop growth will have removed a substantial amount of nutrients, while poor crop growing conditions tend to leave a significant amount of residual nutrients. "It's the latter situation that will require extra attention and soil sampling," he notes. For more information on soil testing, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office, or Kryzanowski in Edmonton at 427-6361.

Agricultural tax update seminars coming

Accountants and lawyers can update their knowledge at one of six "agriculture tax update for professionals" seminars starting October 27. Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch has offered this popular day long course for the past 12 years. This year's seminar will zero in on farm estate planning. Afternoon concurrent sessions will look at particular methods and options for incorporated and unincorporated farms. As well, the seminar will review agricultural issues including federal/provincial programs such as the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA), and look at current caselaw. Speakers are accountants Ted Finningley of Calgary and Dereka Thibault of Edmonton. Seminars will be held in Grande Prairie on October 27, Calgary on October 28, Lethbridge on October 29, Red Deer on November 3, Edmonton on November 4 and Lloydminster on November 10. Seminar cost is $140 (including GST), but anyone who can't attend can buy the course materials for $70. For more information, contact Trish Pannell at the farm business management branch in Olds at 556-4240.

Farmers tell survey transportation policy should change

More than half of Alberta farmers in a recent survey thought the current method of paying the Crow Benefit should change. The survey is part of an Angus Reid report that asked farmers about barley marketing and transportation issues. The report was released by Ernie Isley, Alberta's agriculture minister. "I am pleased that many farmers recognize a need to change and are prepared to examine alternatives," says Isley. "What form those changes should take is still a matter for debate." Farmers are more definitive on the issue of cost-sharing arrangements in Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) accounts. Over 80 per cent of producers surveyed said they want a user-pay grain handling and transportation system as opposed to a system that shares the costs evenly among users. Half of the survey respondents also felt the current system couldn't become more efficient without changing the method of payment. Within the system, they find little competition among railways and grain handling companies. However, 40 per cent found substantial competition among commercial truckers. "Farmers also seem to be aware that a new GATT agreement would put our existing transportation subsidies in jeopardy," says Isley. "The results indicate that Alberta farmers lean toward change. We hope to come up with acceptable alternatives at the next meeting of federal and provincial agriculture ministers in October." For more information, contact Ken Beswick with Alberta Agriculture's planning secretariat at 427-2417.

Apiculturist moves to Tree Nursery

Alberta Agriculture's apiculture section has moved from the department's Edmonton headquarters to a new location. Apiculturist Kenn Tuckey's new office is at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre on the northeast corner of Edmonton. The move is part of a reorganization of Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division. The responsibilities of the section remain the same, but will shift emphasis to more extension activities. "Beekeepers and other interested persons are invited to come for a personal visit," says Tuckey. The centre's address is 17507 Fort Road. (Take the Manning Freeway north out of Edmonton and watch for brown highway signs.) Doug Coulter, the other department apiculturist, will remain in Falher. He can be reached at 837-2211, FAX 837-8228 or by writing Box 90, Falher, Alberta, T0H 1M0. Tuckey can be contacted by calling 422-1789, FAXing 472-6096 or writing R.R. 6, Edmonton, T5B 4K3.

World food day October 16

Food security is the theme of the 1992 World Food Day on October 16. Established in 1979 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Food Day is marked by activities in more than 150 countries around the world. More than 200 organizations make up the World Food Day Association of Canada. One of the organizations is the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA). In a Food Day release the CFA says it "believes the best way to promote food security is to create environments supportive of countries' agricultural sectors". That environment includes safety nets, fair taxation and less red tape and regulation. The CFA also says farmers should be able to choose the marketing systems that work best for them, "providing food is priced fairly for both consumers and farmers. Specifically in Canada, it is important that Canadians resist pressures to turn to other countries for food readily available in Canada, no matter how inviting prices may at times appear outside of the country, particularly the United States." For more information on Food Day activities, contact the Alberta World Food Day in Edmonton at 425-6572.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

October 19, 1992

Conservation tillage best fall practice

The goals of fall tillage can often be achieved in a different way says an Alberta regional soil conservation specialist.

"All of the reasons people can give you for fall cultivation make sense within a given farming system. But those reasons are sometimes contrary to good soil conservation practices," says the Fairview-based John Zylstra. "It's better to look at a conservation tillage system."

Conservation tillage is a total management system, not just cutting back the number of tillage passages. "You can still control weeds and prepare a seed bed with conservation tillage, but you get the extra conservation benefits," he says. These include reduced sheet and rill erosion, improved soil quality, decreased soil pulverization from rain and conserved soil moisture in dry years.

For example, Zylstra suggests using straw choppers and chaff spreaders instead of fall cultivating. Choppers and spreaders reduce straw and chaff problems in the spring. "Good residue management at harvest decreases the need for tillage," explains Zylstra, "as can more powerful seed drills."

Weed control can also be handled by means other than cultivation he notes. Applying inexpensive herbicides after harvest or glyphosate before harvest, not only lessens the need for cultivating, but is often a more effective control.

In the case of wild oats, post-emergent herbicides can be used. "You have to balance the need to control wild oats with the need to conserve straw and moisture on the soil surface," he says.

While getting a head start on spring work is important, it might not be necessary on some fields. Some fields may dry up too quickly in the spring if too much fall work is done he notes. "Fields drying out more quickly isn't always an advantage, if the fields are too dry by the time they are seeded," Zylstra adds. "The more residue left on the surface, the more moisture conserved for the growing crop."

Applying fertilizer in the fall also saves time in the spring. However, many farmers find it cost effective to band fertilizer either when seeding or with their first tillage pass in the spring.

Many soils don't need aeration by cultivation to produce good crops. As well, if the cultivation is too often or too fast, the soil is pulverized. This makes it more prone to erosion.

Another reason often given for fall cultivation is to get weed seeds and volunteer grain to germinate. The volunteer grain can be left overwinter as a protective soil cover. "This is true, but crop rotations with appropriate herbicides make this unnecessary," he says.

Contact: *John Zylstra*
835-2291

Rainfall simulator gives insight to canola residue

A small amount of canola residue can have a dramatic effect in reducing soil loss from rainfall erosion says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Data from our rainfall simulator showed when canola residue

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This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

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cover is increased from 10 to 20 per cent, the soil loss is decreased by two and a half times," says Tom Goddard, a soil conservation specialist with the conservation and development branch.

Goddard adds as residue cover increases, soil loss occurs at a lesser rate. In the most recent rainfall simulator trials, when residue cover increased from 20 to 40 per cent, soil loss only decreased 0.5 times.

"Most erosion research has been done on row crops or cereals, and not as much is known about fragile residues such as canola," says Goddard. "The simulator has allowed us to gather much more information about canola, a major crop here in Alberta."

The simulator looks like a square bathroom shower stall. It's placed in a field and a fixed amount of rainfall is applied to the square metre of ground it covers. Water and soil that run off this area is measured. "This allows us to quantify runoff and soil infiltration without waiting around for an appropriate storm," he says.

Rainfall simulation has helped researchers look at conservation tillage and canola. Conservation tillage is generally defined as keeping a minimum of 30 per cent crop residue on the soil surface. "While it's extremely difficult to keep that amount of residue on a canola field, our research shows soil loss drops off when there is 30 per cent or more surface residue."

The rainfall simulation program has also shown two important factors control the amount of runoff and soil loss from a field. "Farmers can control both these factors—surface roughness and residues—through tillage. Both the amount and type of tillage can smooth a field and bury valuable residue," says Goddard.

One of the simplest ways of keeping more residue and leaving a field slightly rougher is to slow down. Research in Saskatchewan—using field cultivators—showed slowing down from 15 km/h to 5 km/h increased residue on the field from 26 per cent of the original amount to 58 per cent. "The slower tillage speeds have a similar effect to fewer tillage operations," he adds.

This fall the simulator will be used to do more work on wheat versus canola residue and runoff. Preliminary results show there is statistically less runoff on wheat residue than on canola, but there aren't statistical differences in soil loss.

The rainfall simulator has also been used for awareness activities at soil conservation tours and field days around the province. The simulator is partially funded by the Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI). For more information on the rainfall simulator program, contact Karen Skarberg in Edmonton at 422-6530.

Contact: Tom Goddard
422-6530

Fall fertilizing effective management option

Good moisture conditions across most of Alberta could make fall fertilizing a good management option this fall says an Alberta Agriculture soil specialist.

"Dry weather and soil last fall throughout much of the province didn't provide very good conditions for fall fertilizing," says Ross McKenzie.

Generally, applying nitrogen fertilizer in the fall has many factors that can mean success or failure he says. Type of fertilizer, high pH soils, saturated soils or warm soils can make the fertilizer either more or less effective. "The key is choosing the right fertilizer based on your needs and the conditions. For the best start, do a soil test," he says.

McKenzie also recommends fall banding, rather than broadcast fertilizing. As a general rule, fall banded nitrogen application is as effective as spring banding for most soil types. The exception is when soils are saturated for an extended period in the spring. This happens frequently in west central Alberta on poorly to moderately drained Black, Dark Gray and Gray Wooded soils. Spring and fall banding of nitrogen fertilizer are more or less equal as the best fertilizer application options. Spring broadcast is the next best method, and the least effective is fall broadcasting.

A number of other farm management decisions can play a role in the decision to fall fertilize he says. Time management is one consideration. Fall fertilizing may save one field operation next spring and allow earlier seeding. Fall banding can also have conservation benefits by helping preserve soil moisture.

"Fertilizer prices often are better in the fall, so economically it might work out to buy and apply fertilizer in the fall," McKenzie adds. As well, both fertilizer and application equipment are frequently more available in the fall.

Most fertilizer dealers, industry agronomists and Alberta Agriculture district agriculturists can provide information about fertilizer application.

Contact: Dr. Ross McKenzie
381-5126

Feeder cattle forward pricing contracts changing

If you plan to forward price feeder cattle into 1993 you should be aware of coming contract changes says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The changes should affect both hedging and forward contracting, and should allow futures contracts to more accurately represent the feeder cattle trade," says Ron Gietz.

Forward pricing is a marketing option that works well for managing risk on uniform truckload lots of feeder cattle. It's particularly good for backgrounders, since margins are typically

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narrow and sensitive to selling price.

"You can forward price two ways, through hedging on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) feeder cattle futures market, or by using a forward contract with a feedlot or cattle dealer," he says. In both cases, the CME futures contract along with Canadian dollar futures or bank contracts are used to set a future, or forward price, for feeder cattle.

"The CME contract specifications will change beginning with January 1993 contracts," notes Gietz. Contract size has been increased and the "settlement index" redefined.

Contract size was 44,000 lbs., and will increase to 50,000 lbs. because modern trucks are larger. "This means your contract is for about eight more head," says Gietz. One futures contract is now about 67 head of 750 lb. feeders, compared to 59 in the old system.

The CME composite weighted average price for feeders will replace the U.S. Feeder Steer price (USFSP). The price is used as a cash settlement price for expired feeder cattle futures contracts.

"The new CME composite price is more accurate. Not only does it use a more uniform sample, it's also based on published United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) price reports and a public formula, so it's easier to track and verify," Gietz says. "As a result, the CME prices and future contracts should be a more accurate barometer of the U.S. market for heavy feeder steers."

The CME composite price is a seven calendar day average based on sample sales of 700 to 900 lb. medium and medium and large frame number one steers from 12 states. These states represent 70 per cent of the U.S. feeder cattle trade.

"The decision to use forward price feeder cattle should be based on a producer's sensitivity to price risk, and whether or not an acceptable price can be locked in," he says. "In general, forward contracting is a more effective marketing tool when cattle price trends are low, rather than when prices are rising."

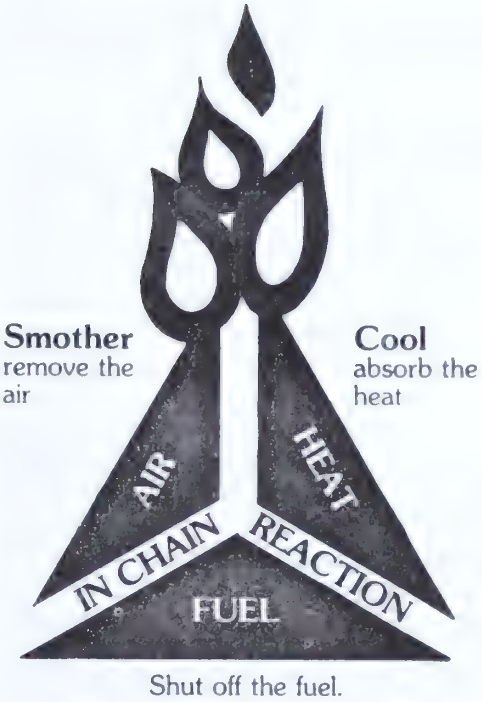
Anyone interested in learning more about forward pricing can get a copy of Alberta Agriculture's Marketing Manual notes Gietz. The manual discusses the mechanics of forward pricing and a variety of other marketing options. For more information, contact your Alberta Agriculture regional marketing specialist or the market analysis branch in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Where there's smoke, there's fire

Understand fire's triangle and you can prevent fire on your farm says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Fuel, oxygen and heat are the ingredients of fire. "Take away any of those components, and the threat of fire is gone," says Eric Jones, farm safety specialist. "That means prevention around the farm and in your home."



Jones has several prevention tips for the fall and winter. "During harvest stop and clear out debris around combine engines and build up around grain truck mufflers," he says.

No smoking policies around fuel storage areas and farm buildings are recommended. Carry at least one multi-purpose 10 pound fire extinguisher in all equipment and vehicles. Keep an extinguisher at the entrance of all farm buildings.

"In your home, fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are a must, and a small price to pay for your family's safety," he says. "But also remember they need to be maintained." Smoke detectors should be on every level. They need battery checks. One fire extinguisher is recommended for the kitchen and others at entries. Extinguishers should be checked annually.

His rules for avoiding home fires again include no smoking, especially in bedrooms and rumpus rooms. "Inspect sofas, big oversized chairs and beds before you go to bed if there are smokers in the house."

Jones also suggests not using extra heating appliances in the winter and unplugging appliances you don't use regularly.

"You also need to know how to travel through your house in the dark," he says. "Many victims have been found near windows because they didn't know where they were in a house fire and they panicked."

Most of Alberta's farm fires are in equipment and buildings. During the 1980s 90 per cent of farm fires involved tractors, balers, grain trucks, combines, sheds, barns, shops and private vehicles. The estimated loss was $80 million.

"The other 10 per cent were in homes where most farmers store and work with their farm records, plan work for the day and most importantly live with their families," says Jones.

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While property damage to farm homes totaled $21.9 million, the more devastating statistic were 15 deaths and 47 injuries during the 1980s he adds. Those 15 deaths were half of all the fire-related deaths on Alberta farms during that decade.

Farm fire deaths in 1980 through 1989 accounted for 13 per cent of all deaths on Alberta farms. Fire injuries were six per cent of the total number of farm injuries during the same period.

To date in 1992, there haven't been any farm fire deaths in Alberta.

Contact: Eric Jones
427-2186

4-H scholarships awarded to 86 students

Eighty-six past and present 4-H members have been awarded scholarships for the 1992-93 academic year.

"Post-secondary students from throughout the province benefitted from over $57,000 offered in scholarships this year," says Elaine Hawrelak, scholarship co-ordinator. "We received 285 applications, and each one was considered based on 4-H and community involvement, leadership skills, school activities, academic standing and other criteria set by scholarship donors."

In 1992, two new scholarships were added to the program. They are the Alberta Farm and Ranch Writer's Award for $500 and the George Pimm Memorial Scholarship for $300. This brings the total number of scholarships to 41.

Individuals, corporations, associations, the Alberta government and memorial funds sponsor the wide variety of 4-H scholarships available to former and current 4-H members.

For more information about the 4-H scholarship program in Alberta or starting a 4-H scholarship, contact Alberta Agriculture's 4-H Branch at Room 200, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, or call 427-2541.

Contact: Elaine Hawrelak
427-2541

Editor's Note: A complete list of 4-H scholarship winners for 1992-93 is included at the end of this Agri-News issue.

Agri-News briefs

Try chaff spreader for better residue management

When using reduced or zero tillage, more attention needs to be paid to the way straw and chaff come out of your combine says a regional soil conservation specialist. "Many straw choppers do a fairly good job of spreading straw behind the combine," says John Zylstra. "But care should be taken to make sure it covers the width of the cutting header." Chaff usually isn't spread. This creates problems the next spring. "Those problems can be differences in moisture around the field, or allelopathic or toxic effects on the next crop," he says. "They can show up in uneven germination and crop growth. This can lead to a grade loss, and sometimes even a yield loss." Chaff spreaders can help. They range in price from about $1,500 to $4,500. "Another option is building your own. Designs are available," he notes. For more information, contact any regional soil conservation specialist, or Zylstra in Fairview at 835-2291.

Irrigation association conference November 16 and 17

The Alberta Irrigation Project Association (AIPA) is holding its annual conference November 16 and 17 in Lethbridge. The conference theme is "irrigation—the future of farming". The first day features four workshops on production associations, agri-business relations, media and new technology. Scheduled banquet speaker is Shirley McClellan, Alberta's associate agriculture minister. The final day includes presentations on sustainable development and grass carp as well as the AIPA annual meeting. The conference will be held at the Lethbridge Lodge. For more information, contact the AIPA office in Lethbridge at 328-3063.

Canadian Wagyu Association inaugural annual meeting November 12

The Canadian Wagyu Association will hold its first annual meeting in Calgary on November 12. Wagyu is a beef breed developed in Japan. The one day meeting features topics such

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as the breed's origin and characteristics; market potential in the Pacific Rim; meat quality factors rating Wagyu; reproductive technology; breed improvement programs; and, the worldwide Wagyu movement. The meeting will be held at the Crossroads Hotel in Calgary with registration starting at 8:30 a.m. To pre-register, call Marcel Morin at 640-1494 in Calgary.

Western Stock Growers' director nominations open

Nominations for zone directors and directors-at-large for the Western Stock Growers' Association are now open. Nominations close at 5 p.m. on October 30. Directorships are open in zones one, two, eight and nine. Two director-at-large positions also need to be filled. Voting will be by mail and results announced at the association's annual convention December 10 through 12 in Red Deer. For more information or for nomination forms, contact Pam Miller in Calgary at 250-9121.

Alberta Venison Council convention Nov. 5-7

The Alberta Venison Council is holding its annual convention November 5 through 8 in Edmonton. Technical topics include nutrition, genetics, management, marketing, diseases and parasites. Three workshops will look at fencing, velvet production, and animal management and handling. Both technical presentations and workshops are designed to increase a participant's game farming knowledge. Two farm tours of an elk and an ostrich farm are offered. A trade fair is also planned. The convention will be held at the Mayfield Inn. For more information, contact Donna Carson, convention committee chair, at 464-7475 or FAX 467-5257.

Agri-Trade show November 11-14

Western Canada's largest indoor farm equipment show returns to Red Deer November 11 through 14. The Agri-Trade International Farm Equipment and Services Exposition will be held at the Westerner Park beginning at noon on November 11. Agri-Trade'92 features some of the most up-to-date farm equipment and technology. In conjunction with Agri-Trade'92 is a three-day outlook seminar. The afternoon sessions feature world and Canadian outlooks for oilseeds, wheat, feed grain, speciality crops and cattle. There will also be a look at world weather patterns and the importance of risk management in a marketing plan. Pre-registration is preferred with rates for one day or three days. The seminar is presented by the Mitcon Group and Alberta Agriculture. For more information on the outlook seminar call Cal Ausenhus in Didsbury at 335-8629, Paul Cassidy in Calgary at 226-0018, or Doug Walkey with Alberta Agriculture in Red Deer at 340-7612. For more information on Agri-Trade'92, contact Patrick Kennedy at 347-4491 or FAX 343-6188.

Barley commission holds regional meetings

The Alberta Barley Commission will hold regional meetings across Alberta starting tomorrow (October 20). The first two, for region one, are in Lethbridge (1 p.m. Sven Ericksen's) and Claresholm (7:30 p.m. Agri-plex). Region two meetings will be held in High River (1 p.m. Highwood Memorial Centre) and Three Hills (7:30 p.m. Community Centre) on October 21. Lacombe (1 p.m. Memorial Centre) and Stettler (7:30 p.m. Parish Hall) are the sites for region three meetings on October 22. Region four meetings are in Vegreville (1 p.m. Legion Hall) and St. Paul (7:30 p.m. Ukrainian Orthodox Cultural Centre) on October 27. Spruce Grove (1 p.m. Grove Motor Inn) and Westlock (7:30 p.m. Westlock Inn) are the locations for region five meetings on October 28. The regional meetings wrap-up on October 29 in High Prairie (1 p.m. Elks Hall) and Fairview (7:30 p.m. Legion Hall). Regional directors will be elected for each of the six regions at these meetings. Nominations are still open for three director-at-large positions. Those nominations close on November 20 with the election during the commission's annual meeting December 2 in Red Deer. For more information, contact the Commission in Calgary at 291-9111, or 1-800-265-9111.

Using weather damaged wheat in swine diets

Low priced, weather damaged wheat is an opportunity for pig producers to add wheat to their feed rations. "Wheat is recommended in swine diets because it is a high energy, high protein, palatable feedstuff," says Sam Jaikaran, an Alberta Agriculture monogastric nutritionist. Feeder pigs diets with higher energy levels promote faster gains and better feed conversion he says. When fed to lactating sows, wheat promotes higher milk production and less weight loss. "These benefits can now be had at possibly lower cost, since the current price of feed wheat is even lower than barley in some cases," he adds. Jaikaran notes wheat should't be directly substituted for barley, and feed rations need to be reformulated. Alberta Agriculture has a fact sheet on the subject. "Low bushel weight cereal grains for swine" (Agdex 440/63-3) is available by writing the publications office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. For more information, contact Jaikaran in Edmonton at 427-8906.

1992 4-H Scholarship Recipients

Alberta Dairymen's (Univ.) Association & Alberta Agriculture	$1000 each	*Martin Staub*	Millet
		Ella Wright	Didsbury
		Gail Cunningham	Kelsey
(College)	$500	*Hendrik Wildeboer*	Lacombe
Alberta Farm and Ranch Writer's Award	$500	*Merrilea Tillotson*	Innisfree
Alberta Ford & Mercury Dealer Scholarship	$1000 each	*Tamara Tverkutes*	Taber
		Linda Arbuckle	Carstairs
		Gwen Skocdopole	Botha
		Darren Hueppelsheuser	Blackfalds
		Karl Kennett	Barrhead
		Darryl Clark	Edgerton
		Darla Hurley	Beaverlodge
Alberta Salers Association	$500	*Tova Place*	Nanton
Alberta Treasury Branches	$1000 each	*Virginia Holthe*	Turin
		Kimberly Alsip	Bragg Creek
		Deanna Knowles	Byemoor
		Chris Simpson	Bentley
		Stacy Borduzak	Vimy
		Deanna Brown	Tofield
		Annette Schoepp	Wembley
Alberta Wheat Pool (1st yr)	$500 each	*Adrienne Ulrich*	Medicine Hat
		Courtney Ainsworth	Clive
(2nd yr)		*Tanya Salt*	Cardston
		Sharon Crawford	Irma
Alpha Milk Company	$500 each	*Ryan Blackmore*	Cardston
		Darren Hipkin	Sherwood Park
		Craig Shand	Cremona
A & E Capelle LN Herefords	$250 approx	*Lori Andrews*	Barrhead
Bale Bandits	$1000	*Lee Heidecker*	Coronation
Blue Klein Memorial	$250	*Ryan Ramsay*	Bluffton
Canadian National Exhibition	$1000	*Sheila Thompson*	Milk River
Ceres International Women's Fraternity	$100	*Kristin Berg*	Sedgewick
Dixon Shield Memorial	$425	*Angel Roberts*	Barrhead
Don Matthews	$200	*Christine Erichsen*	Botha
Edith Taylor Memorial	$400	*Margo Stewart*	Grimshaw
Farm Credit Corporation	$300 each	*Connie Swanson*	Milk River
		Lana Tacey	Strathmore
		Christa Stringer	Sunnynook
		Teri Woodrow	Lacombe
		Jason French	Westlock
		Kimberly Kurek	St. Paul
		Sandra Hogg	Wembley
Farmhouse International Fraternity	$100	*Trevor Nonay*	Legal

4-H Foundation of Alberta	$425	*Angela Gottenberg*	Vulcan
George Pimm Memorial	$300	*Barbara Gabert*	Manning
Glen Bodell Memorial	$100	*Sherry Shaw*	Edmonton
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother	$1500 each	*Stacey Sellers*	Innisfree
		Lorena Reinhardt	Rockyford
		Clarence Wildeboer	Lacombe
Hoechst Canada Bursary	$500	*Tara Lee*	Jarvie
Inga Marr Memorial	$300	*Virginia Allsopp*	Youngstown
Ken Edgerton Memorial	$400	*Cynthia Senft*	Dixonville
Lilydale Co-operative	$800	*Keith Evans*	Carstairs
Marilyn Sue Lloyd	$150	*Wayne Sargeant*	Rimbey
Minburn Wild Rose	$200	*Christine Gynra*	Innisfree
Norma Jean Grey	$1000 each	*Heather Laidlaw*	Bow Island
		Carolyn Douglas	Lacombe
		Dixon Hammond	Pincher Creek
		Lisa Veidt	Grimshaw
		Leila Milne	Fairview
Pennington Memorial	$963 each	*Rhonda Penno*	Barrhead
		Julianne Sage	Spruce Grove
Petro Canada Youth Leadership Award	$1000 each	*Kurtis Hewson*	Delia
		Erin Mitchell	Pincher Creek
		Andrea Wojcik	High River
		Alan Wharmby	Lamont
Stanley Shulhan Memorial	$200	*Brenda Schneider*	Nisku
Thomas Caryk Memorial	$500	*Keith Gabert*	Manning
TX BAR 1	$1000	*Scott Swanek*	Lethbridge
TX Bar 2	$500	*Curtis Sinnott*	Pincher Creek
TX Bar 3	$400	*Curtis Lanz*	Rolling Hills
United Farmers of Alberta	$500 each	*Shauna Adams*	Forestburg
		Jayson Van Sluys	Fort Macleod
United Grain Growers	$500	*Emery Klein*	Delburne
Vermilion River 4-H District	$200	*Laurie Willes*	Vermilion
Wetaskiwin District 4-H Scholarship	$700 each	*Gregory Wedman*	Wetaskiwin
		Nicole Sande	Millet
		Racene Heilman	Wetskiwin
Wheat Board Surplus Monies Trust	$600 each	*Doug Logan*	Lamond
		Laine Bishop	Carseland
		Carmen Knowles	Byemoor
		Erin Branson	Markerville
		Barbara Szybunka	Sangudo
		Nancy Kowalski	Ryley
		Michael Hegland	Wembley
Woodgrove Unifarm Local Scholarship	$400	*Annette Polanski*	Thorhild

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AGRI-NEWS

October 26, 1992

NOV 17 1992

Agri-food exports to U.S. grow since trade agreement

More open trade between Canada and the United States has contributed to growth in Alberta's agri-food exports says an Alberta Agriculture trade analyst.

Alberta agri-food exports to the U.S. have increased by 35 per cent since the Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) took effect on January 1, 1989. Exports have grown from a pre-agreement $597 million, to $804 million in 1991. "With less than four years since freer trade started, indications are the FTA is bringing the desired changes and results that were expected," says Darcy Willis of the department's trade policy secretariat.

"We can expect Alberta's agricultural sector will benefit even more through complete elimination of tariffs by 1998, and as non-tariff barriers are reduced and gradually eliminated," he adds. Already, tariffs on Canada's agri-food exports to the U.S. have declined on average by about 60 per cent since the FTA took effect.

After two rounds of accelerated tariff removal, tariffs on a variety of products are gone. These include natural honey, oat products, canola seed, canola oil, canola meal, peas, beans, lentils, and fresh and chilled beef. "Alberta exporters have saved in the neighborhood of $3.8 million since those tariffs ended. The current third round will result in further savings," he says.

For certain key Alberta exports, the end of tariffs has improved competitiveness in the U.S. market he adds. Canola oil is a good example. Canola oil exports to the U.S. increased to $51 million in 1991, up more than 80 per cent from the 1988 total of $28 million. "The Alberta government pushed for an end to canola oil tariffs because of the importance and potential of the U.S. market," he notes.

Even more significant than the tariff reductions, says Willis, is the atmosphere created by the FTA, particularly secure access to the U.S. market. "This includes an effective method of resolving trade disputes and a process for dealing with technical trade barriers."

Beef and live cattle trade is one sector that has thrived in the freer trade climate. Alberta exports have increased by $101 million (37 per cent) since 1988. "This is partly due to the positive investment climate created by the FTA for Alberta beef processors, which in turn, has contributed to a westward shift in cattle and beef production," he says.

As well, a new meat inspection system has brought a more orderly flow of Alberta beef exports. Efforts are also continuing to harmonize the U.S. and Canadian beef grading systems. "This should add considerably to U.S. acceptance of Alberta's high quality beef products," he says.

The FTA dispute settlement system helped Canada remove a U.S. countervail on pork exports, with Canadian producers refunded $18 million in duties collected. Alberta pork exports since 1988 have grown by $30 million, or 65 per cent. Willis notes a hog countervail is currently being challenged through the dispute settlement process.

Other primary commodities, such as barley and wheat exports, have also grown. And, so have processed products exports. "The growth in value-added product sales appears to be significantly outpacing the growth in primary product sales," he notes.

Alberta's improved agri-food export performance has also made a substantial contribution to Canada's overall agricultural trade

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This Week

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Alberta

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

balance with the U.S. he says. Canada has moved from a trade deficit of $677 million in agricultural and food products in 1989, up more than half a billion dollars to $144 million in 1991.

The North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] should reinforce Alberta's export performance in the U.S., as well as provide growing export opportunities in Mexico he adds. "NAFTA should enhance an already strong market in livestock genetics and create additional opportunities in the grains, oilseeds and feed sectors. And in the longer term, as the Mexican population and incomes grow, demand for a range of Alberta's value-added, high quality food products should follow," he says.

Contact: Darcy Willis 427-2637
Arnold Deleeuw 427-4241
Reynold Jaipaul 427-2637

Asia abounds with opportunities for Alberta products says minister

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley returned from his first trade mission to Asia confident Alberta exports to that region will increase in coming years.

"Profitability and long-term access are the rewards of building firmer alliances with Asia, home to the world's most rapidly growing economies," says Isley. "These alliances will stimulate further development of Alberta's agri-food industry in a world that more and more is being driven from the realities of the marketplace."

Japan was the minister's first Asian stop. In Tokyo—at a Canadian Embassy reception attended by 120 senior executives from Japan's major trading corporations, distributors and food processing companies—Isley thanked Alberta's customers and encouraged more commerce between Japan and Alberta. That sentiment was echoed when Isley met with the incoming chair of the ruling party's agricultural policy committee. Both men expressed a desire to strengthen trade relations.

"In the short-term, Alberta faces intense competition in Japan. But as this market is liberalized and as Japanese tastes become more Western, opportunities for Alberta products will multiply," says Isley. "Japan will become more dependent on food imports and view Alberta as a long-term supplier of beef, pork, canola, wheat, barley and vegetable crops. But to fully capitalize on these opportunities, Alberta suppliers must pay special attention to satisfying the requirements of this market and be committed to the market for the long-term."

Isley also moved to allay Japan's concern about the quality of this year's canola crop. He assured Japan that Western Canada's canola industry is interested in keeping its market share and will strive to meet its best customer's requirements for quality oilseed. Over 90 per cent of Alberta's canola seed exports go to Japan. This represents returns of over $200 million to Alberta farmers.

While in Japan, Isley also lent his support to a Canadian products fair in Japan's Sendai region. The fair featured Alberta products such as beef, lamb, french fries and honey. He also opened a new restaurant in the Asakuma chain. The restaurant has Alberta beef on its menu. The Canadian Beef Export Federation is currently discussing a promotion that would feature Alberta beef on the menus of all 107 restaurants in the Asakuma chain.

Isley also endorsed continuing an employee exchange program between Alberta Agriculture and the Seiyu Corporation of Japan. The program, approaching its 10th year, has resulted in several million dollars worth of business and much goodwill between Seiyu and Alberta Agriculture.

China was the mission's second stop. With China moving to a market economy, Alberta is looking to take advantage of the many commercial opportunities in that part of the world. Together with representatives of Alberta's agri-food industry, the minister sought to increase trade in livestock and plant genetics, food and agricultural technology, oilseed, hides and leather, and other food products.

"Northern China has the potential to be a primary agri-food supplier to local Chinese markets and to Japan, Eastern Siberia and Korea. As a supplier of agri-food products, services and technology, Alberta has a vested interested in developing this region's agricultural potential," Isley says.

The Chinese mission began with a beef seminar for government officials in Beijing. China plans to develop a beef industry in the north and is looking to Alberta for guidance. This presents opportunities for Alberta's private sector in beef genetics, production and processing.

The mission also commemorated the 10th anniversary of Alberta twinning with the province of Heilongjiang. The minister looked ahead to the second decade of this relationship. He said the close bonds that have developed would likely result in more commercial benefits for both provinces, not only in agriculture, but also in forestry, oil and gas, municipal engineering and environmental protection technology.

A pasture project in northern China is one successful venture that came from the twinning agreement. Isley signed an agreement for a second pasture development project. Sales of malting barley, forage seeds and beef breeding stock have already been made.

The mission concluded in Hong Kong, where Isley said the mood was optimistic. Many companies are locating in Hong Kong to gain better access to China's rapidly expanding economy. Alberta has similar interests, and the government's office in Hong Kong is helping Alberta companies launch products into China from Hong Kong.

Before leaving for Asia, Isley began his trade and investment-seeking mission in Toronto. He spoke to over 100 representatives of Ontario's agri-food industry and trade community. The minister itemized Alberta's many advantages, including its pro-business attitude, competitively priced energy costs and abundance of raw materials. He rounded out his

Cont'd on page 3

three-day stay in Ontario with meetings and plant tours.

Contact: *Brad Klak* *Barry Mehr*
427-2137 *427-2442*

Cash advance crop combinations require consideration

Producers who plan on taking out cash advances need to examine their options thoroughly before making an application says an Alberta Agriculture financial management specialist.

"If producers are considering taking out an advance of more than $50,000, and if they plan to apply for advances from grains and oilseeds other than wheat and barley, they need to look at their best strategy," says David Thacker of the farm business management branch in Olds.

The Cash Flow Enhancement Program (CFEP) has been extended for the 1992-93 crop year by the federal government. The rules will be similar to last year's. Cash advances are available from two different sources, the Prairie Grain Advance Payment Act (PGAPA) and the Advance Payment for Crops Act (APCA). A maximum interest-free cash advance of $50,000 is available to producers from one or both of the acts.

"The programs have different maximum advances, but the interest-free portion is the same $50,000. So, what crop you choose for your advance, and the order you make your applications can make a real difference to your total eligibility," says Thacker.

"A producer who requires a cash advance of more than $50,000 and needs to use canola, flax, rye or oats to provide security, should take an advance on those crops first, before either wheat or barley," he advises.

For example, take a producer who needs approximately a $70,000 advance. If 45,000 bushels of stored barley is used as security, the producer would receive $49,050 (45,000 times $1.09 per bushel).

While the producer still needs $20,000, and has 10,000 bushels of stored flax for security, only $950 of eligibility remains. "Because cash advances on flax are limited to only the interest-free $50,000 total, the producer won't be able to receive the total advance needed," explains Thacker. "The better choice would have been to apply for the advance on the flax first."

In that case, the producer would have received $29,200 for the stored flax (10,000 bushels times $2.92 per bushel.) Then the producer could apply for a cash advance on the barley for $40,000, making the total advance $69,200. The $50,000 interest-free limit would have been reached with $29,200 from the flax and $20,800 of the barley covered. The producer would pay interest on the remaining $19,200 of the advance.

Thacker says producers should examine their marketing and financial plan very carefully before applying for a cash advance, and consult with their local elevator agent for all the details.

"Deciding on the strategy with the most advantages should take into consideration the time element of the interest free loans for the different grains and oilseeds," he says.

The PGAPA is for stored wheat and barley, and is administered by the Canadian Wheat Board through their authorized elevator agents. As in the 1991-92 crop year, advances can be made up to $250,000 and the first $50,000 is interest-free until quotas allow farmers to deliver their crops. Approximately $1.63 per bushel can be advanced on wheat and $1.09 per bushel on barley.

The PGAPA also allows emergency advances to pay for grain drying. Producers may take up to $3,000 in grain drying advances within the current PGAPA and CFEP interest-free limits. "If the poor harvest weather conditions persist, emergency advances for unthreshed grain may also be available after November 15, 1992," notes Thacker. These advances are at the rate of one-half of normal advances, up to $15,000, within the current interest-free limits. "Local elevator agents will have more information as it becomes available," he adds.

Cash advances for non-board crops such as canola, flax, rye and oats are available through the APCA. It's administered by the Prairie Canola Growers Council and isn't available at all elevators. Approximate prices per bushel are $2.83 for canola, $2.92 for flax, 69 cents for rye and $1.14 for oats.

Contact: *David Thacker*
556-4247

Price of wheat is right for feeding pigs

Feeding pigs wheat has a double bonus this year says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Not only can wheat provide the energy requirements a pig needs, it will probably cost less than barley," says Sam Jaikaran, monogastric nutritionist. "Wheat is higher in protein and energy than barley, and it's also cheap and available with this fall's weather damaged crops."

Traditionally barley is the main cereal grain in pig diets. A 48 pound or better bushel weight barley is needed to put enough energy in swine rations. However, with frost damage across the province some barley bushel weights are lower than 48 pounds.

"This means lower energy content. Pigs fed low energy diets gain more slowly and have poorer feed conversion, but adding wheat can help improve the energy level," he says. "Wheat is recommended for use in swine diets because it's high energy, high protein and very palatable.

"It's also fortunate for pig producers that wheat is available and cheap," he adds. "If you can buy good bushel weight wheat for $80 per tonne and barley at $100 per tonne, you can save at least $10 per tonne on feed costs and have a better quality feed."

Wheat has been used in diets of weaners, growers and

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finishers—at rates from five per cent to all wheat—with good growth and performance. As well, wheat used in lactating sow diets promotes high milk production and less weight loss in sows. Wheat is recommended at up to 75 per cent of a lactating sow's diet. It isn't usually included in dry sow diets because these diets are low energy.

When using wheat instead of barley, feed rations need to be reformulated. "You shouldn't just substitute wheat for barley because that wastes protein. You can further refine wheat-based diets through using synthetic lysine," he says.

"All wheat diets consistently out perform barley diets, but there are some precautions, particularly in how you grind the feed," Jaikaran says. Finely ground wheat makes the diet unpalatable and causes ulcers in feeder pigs. A particle size of 0.9 mm is recommended.

Contamination is another potential problem. "Ergot bodies in wheat have been reported in southern Alberta," he says. "When consumed, ergot is extremely toxic to pigs. Symptoms range from abortions and gangrene, to death." The tolerance for ergots in pig feed is one ergot body per 1,000 kernels of grain.

He also notes the digestible energy of weather damaged wheat does decrease as damage increases. This is usually reflected in the wheat's bushel weight.

"Low bushel weight for cereal grains for swine", a fact sheet included in the Alberta Pork Production Handbook, looks at this topic in more detail. It includes tables of feeder pig performance on low bushel weight wheat and barley. Copies of the fact sheet are available by writing the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

The complete pork handbook is available through the pork and poultry branch at the same address. A handbook subscription costs $20 (plus GST).

Contact: Sam Jaikaran
427-8906

Controlling grubs has added benefits

When cattlemen control warble grubs, there's a bonus control of other parasites says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Four methods—pour-on, spot-on, injectable and high pressure spray—are ways to apply systemic insecticides in the fall says Ali Khan. "All four are effective ways to control warble grubs," adds the livestock pest control specialist with the beef cattle and sheep branch.

"There's also the added benefit that warble control can help control other livestock parasites," he says. "Cattle producers who treat their herds for warbles are also preventing their herd from becoming heavily infested with lice. Treated cattle will have about two-thirds less lice than untreated animals."

Cattle grubs are larvae that become warble flies. Two types are found in Alberta, the common cattle grub and the northern cattle grub. Both of these parasitic grubs harm cattle in many ways, causing losses to the cattle industry.

Lice infestations can reduce the market value of cattle. They reduce weight gains in feeder cattle. As well, heavy infestations can increase abortion frequency, reduce weaning weights and even reduce a bull's breeding ability.

Khan notes Alberta has had an effective warble control program since 1969. Many municipalities have warble control programs. The number of warbles found on slaughter cattle has dropped dramatically in the last five years.

"While, less than one per cent of the carcasses checked at packing plants in Alberta show any signs of warbles, it is important to continue to control this insect," he says.

Khan recently monitored two untreated herds. They were given ELISA (enzyme linked imuno sorbant assay) blood tests in the fall to check for warbles. All the animals were checked for warbles again in the spring by hand palpation. Warbles showed up in half the cattle in one of the herds. "That points to the importance of continued treatments to ensure warble control," he says.

For more information on treating warbles and lice, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or local municipal agriculture fieldman.

Contact: Dr. Ali Khan
427-5083

Alberta Agriculture appointment

New Peace regional director named

Yvonne Grabowsky is the new regional director for Alberta Agriculture's Peace Region. Grabowsky had been acting regional director for the Fairview-based position for the last year. She joined Alberta Agriculture in 1989 as the regional home economist for the Peace. Grabowsky has had a long career in extension. It started in 1969 with Manitoba Agriculture after her graduation from the University of Manitoba. She was a home economist in Morris and St. Pierre Manitoba; provincial 4-H specialist; clothing and textile specialist; and, also worked for the Department of Health and Social Development. "I'm very excited about the opportunities that lie ahead as I feel the agricultural industry in the '90s is facing a very challenging and interesting time," she says. "I think it is very exciting to be part of the industry in a time when we may be looking at the industry experiencing major changes in its development and direction." Grabowsky has also always had a strong interest in agriculture and rural communities. She was raised on a Saskatchewan grain farm and spent her school years in a small town in Manitoba. With her husband Bill, she owned and operated a purebred beef farm in southern Manitoba. The Grabowskys have three children. Irene Leavitt, assistant deputy minister of field services, made the appointment announcement. Grabowsky can be contacted in Fairview at 835-2295.

Agri-News briefs

Agri-food competitiveness conference Nov. 22-24

Canada's first conference on international competitiveness in the agri-food industry will be held November 22 to 24 in Saskatoon. "Winning in a global market" will bring together leaders of the Canadian agri-food industry to look at opportunities in the changing world market. The conference will showcase people and organizations that have adapted to change and demonstrated innovative approaches to new opportunities. Among the keynote speakers are: Nancy Austin, co-author of the best seller, **A Passion for Excellence**; Faith Popcorn, consumer trend forecaster and author of **The Popcorn Report**; and, Jerry White, one of Canada's most published management authors. Sessions will cover topics such as seizing global markets, forming strategic alliances in the agri-food sector, commercializing science and technology, and staying abreast of new trends in the industry. The conference also includes an exhibitors' showcase. The conference is co-sponsored by Agriculture Canada, the University of Saskatchewan, the Agri-food Competitiveness Council and the International Centre of Agricultural Science and Technology (ICAST). For more information contact: Dr. John Stewart, University of Saskatchewan at (306)996-4055; Charlie Milne, Agri-Food Competitiveness Council in Guelph at (519)837-5849; or, Don Sandford with ICAST in Saskatoon at (306)668-2650.

Market outlook seminar November 4

A market outlook seminar in Josephburg on November 4 will focus on the next six months. Canola, barley, wheat, oats and peas will be in the spotlight. Speakers who will share their forecasts are: Brian White of the Canadian Wheat Board; Bob Sutton of Canada Malt; Russ Crawford and Blair Roth of the Alberta Wheat Pool; Woody Galloway, Canamera Foods; Brenda Brindle of Kenagra Management; and, Errol Anderson, Palliser Grain. The registration fee includes lunch. Pre-registration is requested by calling the Alberta Agriculture district office in Fort Saskatchewan at 998-0190.

Direct seed conference and trade show

The Northeast Conservation Connection is hosting a direct seeding conference and trade show November 23 through 25 in Lloydminster. On the agenda are direct seeding systems, weed control, fertility, residue management, economics, rotations and production panels. Keynote speaker is Julian Smith, manager of agronomy and product development with J.R. Simplot Company in Idaho. The November 24 banquet program will feature the play "Creatures of Habit". The registration deadline is November 6. For more information, contact Devan Nault in Bonnyville at 826-3388, or Larry Lamothe in St. Paul at 645-3301.

Alberta lamb carcass wins national competition

A purebred Texel lamb carcass was the grand champion at the first annual Canadian National Lamb Carcass competition. Mike Messing of Eckville qualified two carcasses for the national event after placing first and second at the Alberta level. Texel carcasses are well known for their muscling, lean meat yield and cutability. The reserve national winner was a crossbred carcass from Nova Scotia, with third place going to a Dorset carcass from Quebec. Sixty entries came from seven of 10 provinces. The exceptions were British Columbia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland. The competition was held in conjunction with the Olde Tyme Sheep Fair and Canadian Classic Sheep Dog Trials in Carstairs. Agriculture Canada graders acted as official judges at all provincial competitions and the national final. The new national lamb classifications standards were used as part of the judging criteria. For more information, contact Wray Whitmore in Edmonton at 427-5083.

Sheep and Wool Commission annual zone meetings in November

The Alberta Sheep and Wool Commission will hold its annual zone meetings starting November 6 in Edmonton. Director elections will be held in four of the seven zones. They are zones one, two, four and seven. The commission's 1991 audited financial statement will be available at the meetings. Producers who want a copy by mail, should contact the commission office in Calgary. The 2 p.m. zone six meeting at Edmonton's Agricom on November 6 will be followed by the Farmfair Sheep Show (contact Kathy Playdon at 963-0416). The zone five meeting is in Vermilion on November 7 at 2 p.m. at the Brunswick Motor Inn (contact Lois George 847-2371). Strathmore is the location for the zone three meeting on November 11. The meeting is at 7 p.m. at the Wheatland County Inn (contact Pat Barott 599-2141). The zone seven meeting is in Rycroft at 10 a.m. on November 14. The meeting at Courtesy Corner Restaurant will be followed by an afternoon meeting of the Peace River Lamb Association on forestry sheep grazing opportunities. Meeting contact is Morag Othen at 864-2466. November 16 is the date of the zone one meeting in Cardston at 2 p.m. at the provincial building (contact Sten Lundberg). An Alberta Agriculture sheep producer seminar follows. Red Deer is the location of the zone four meeting on November 20. The 7 p.m. meeting is at the provincial building (contact Ian Clark 748-2624). The final zone meeting is for zone two on November 21 at Lethbridge. The afternoon meeting is at the El Rancho Inn at 1 p.m. For more information, contact the commission office in Calgary at 295-1988, or FAX 275-8009.

Oats seminar November 18 and 19

"Oats the versatile alternative" is the theme for the 1992 Oat Producers Association of Alberta seminar November 18 and 19 in Edmonton. A producer panel will look at oats as seed, feed and forage during the first morning of the conference. Among the other general topics are research, policies and marketing. The banquet guest speaker is Otto Lang, currently chair of the Transport Institute of the University of Manitoba. A former Saskatchewan MP, Lang served as Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board in the early 1970s. One-day registrations are available. For more information, call Glenn Binnington in Edmonton at 444-0066

Minister releases first stage of rural development action plan

The first stage of a rural development action plan has been announced by Shirley McClellan, Alberta's associate agriculture minister and minister responsible for rural development. The minister has proposed better access for government programs and services and co-ordination between government departments. "We propose packaging together, for the public's convenience, all rural development related government programs and services," says McClellan. "While the programs will remain in their respective departments, we will adapt them to be more supportive of community activity." A team from the departments of Agriculture, Economic Development and Trade, Municipal Affairs and Tourism, Recreation and Parks will work on the details. For more information, contact Donna Mastel at 422-9156.

ACC researches petrochemical impact

The Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC) is supporting research to assess the impact of the petrochemical industry on cattle production. The research was requested by a number of beef cattle producers last fall during the commission's zone meetings. "This is an extremely complex issue involving principles of chemistry, geology and animal health. We are proceeding carefully and deliberately with the intent of developing a well-researched and factual position on this issue," says Fred van Ingen, ACC technical committee chair and a Redwater cattle producer. To better assess the nature and extent of producer concerns, the commission's September newsletter had a survey questionnaire. To date, about 250 producers have responded. The commission has also committed $50,000 to a study of the potential and actual impact of the petrochemical industry on cattle production in rural Alberta. The research is a joint venture between the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville and a private Calgary firm. Results from the research project are expected early next year. For more information, contact van Ingen at 942-2189, or Marjorie Mann in Calgary at 275-4400.

Coming agricultural events notice

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **December, 1992 or early in 1993**? Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

- Please give the **name, city or town, and phone number** of a **contact person** for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by November 25, 1992 ***to:***
Agri-News Editor
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

*("Coming agricultural events" is published four times a year in **Agri-News**.*
*The next list will be **December 7, 1992**)*

Phone (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

NOV

November 2, 1992

Milk, milk products easiest calcium source

The easiest way to get enough calcium every day is to drink milk, eat milk products and foods made with milk says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"Calcium is a very basic nutrient we all—children and adults—need every day for bones, teeth and other functions such as hormones and blood clotting," says Linda St. Onge of the home economics branch. "Growing children and pregnant and nursing mothers need more than other people. Calcium is especially important for women because they are at more risk for osteoporosis, but women and men aged 50 and over need the same amount of calcium daily."

"You can get about half the calcium you need in a day from one cup of milk," she says. "Milk and milk products are easy sources, because to get the same amount of calcium that's in one glass of milk you'd need to eat three cups of cooked broccoli."

For people who don't like drinking milk, they can "eat" milk in cream soups made with milk, hot and cold cereals, milk puddings and custards. As well, other dairy products such as yogurt and cheese are excellent calcium sources. "For people concerned about fat in their diets, there are a real variety of low-fat dairy products," notes St. Onge.

Some vegetables—in particular, beets, broccoli and celery—are reasonably good sources of calcium, but you need to eat a lot of them. "A full day's calcium requirement in vegetables alone would take about six cups. It takes more planning and work to get all the calcium you need if you can't or don't drink milk or eat dairy products.

"That's another of the advantages of milk. It's harder for our bodies to take the calcium from plant sources. You eat the calcium, but you don't get the full benefit. Our bodies can use calcium from animal sources much more easily," says St. Onge.

Almonds, sesame seeds, fish bones, navy beans, soybeans and tofu are other foods that can provide calcium she adds.

Some people can't digest lactose, the sugar found in milk. "The missing enzyme can be added to milk, or people with a lactose maldigestion problem can eat firm cheeses, yogurt and small servings of milk with meals." St. Onge notes the Dairy Nutrition Council has a fact sheet on lactose maldigestion. It's available in Alberta by calling 1-800-252-7530. The council also has a free calcium publication.

Adults need about 800 mg of calcium daily. Calcium needs peak during the teen years at about 1100 mg per day. School age children need 600 to 900 mg daily. Babies, three and under, need about 500 mg daily. One cup of milk or yogurt, or one and one half ounces of cheese provide about 320 mg of calcium.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Many decisions in choosing a farm computer

It may feel like you need a computer to help make the decision about what computer to buy for your farm says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Hardware, software, memory, disk drives, monitors, printers, modems, cost and where to buy are among the many points to

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

consider when buying a computer says Bruce Waldie, provincial computer applications specialist.

"Economics is a big factor in your choice," he adds, "But, you should remember the computer you buy today is probably what you will use for the next five years, so you shouldn't cut corners." He estimates a basic system will cost under $2,400.

Most farm computers are used by the farm family he notes. "Along with using it for financial and production records, most people also want to do word processing and let the 'kids' play games. All these uses influence what type of computer you want. First, concentrate on what you want your system to do, then purchase a system that gives you the greatest capability and flexibility in your budget."

The first decision is what type of computer to buy. "Your best guideline is the available software, or the computer programs you want and need to use," he says. A guide, put together by Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch, lists over 800 agriculture related programs available in North America. About 95 per cent of the listings in the ""Agricultural Software Directory" are for IBM compatible computers. "This means if you want the greatest availability of software, you should purchase an IBM compatible computer," he says.

Once you decide what type of computer, your next choice is "how much computer". "This means the power level of your computer, or how fast it works," he says. Waldie recommends the minimum as a 80386DX. "The fastest computer you buy should be based on your budget. You can spend another $300 to $400 for the next step up, and gain some speed that will help if you use programs with graphics."

The size of a computer's memory is another important consideration. "Again, your decision depends on what you think you'll be doing with your computer. I suggest getting at least four megabytes of memory if you think you'll be using a Graphical User Interface (GUI), such as Microsoft Windows," says Waldie.

When buying a computer you'll also have to know about two types of drives: floppy and hard. These drives are the storage areas on your computer. Waldie suggests buying at least a 1.44 meg/3.5 inch drive. "If you can add a 5.25 inch drive for under $90, then do it," he says. "Also, buy the largest hard drive you can afford. The smallest you should consider is 100 megabytes."

Monitors and printers are also basic equipment. The basic choice in monitors is between monochrome or color. Waldie recommends color. The other consideration is dot pitch, and he recommends 0.31 mm or smaller. The rule for printers, is unless you plan to do publishable quality work such as sales brochures, a dot matrix printer is good enough.

Waldie also says at least 30 per cent of your computer purchase should be based on your faith in the dealer you buy it from. "Don't expect a full service dealer to give the same price as a discount store. But you should expect better service. And do ask what service the dealer offers, if they do repairs on site and if they can give you agriculture specific advice," he says.

The number of farm computers in Alberta quadrupled between 1986 and 1991. Waldie estimates about 8,500 farms now have a computer.

Alberta Agriculture can help farmers and farm families interested in learning about computers through its Computers on Wheels program. For more information, contact your Alberta Agriculture district office. Since 1986, Computer on Wheels has provided over 750 classes to over 6,000 participants.

Contact: Bruce Waldie
556-4243

Check parking brake on new tractor

A dugout isn't the best parking place for your new tractor, but that kind of parking spot could be possible if you don't check out a few things when you bring a new tractor home from the dealer's lot says an Alberta Agriculture engineer.

"Something that's seldom checked on new tractors is the parking brake," says Robert Maze, a project engineer with the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre. "While the parking brake isn't the most important device on your new tractor, the potential for parking in the dugout, or a more serious accident, can exist."

Over the last two years the centre has tested tractor parking brakes. The centre has been working with a Canadian Standards Association (CSA) committee dealing with agriculture machinery. This committee has been looking at brakes along with other agricultural machinery and safety standards. Some of those standards are hydraulic fluids, quick couplers, electrical connectors and draw bars.

While reviewing the proposed parking brake standards, Maze discovered something about new tractors. "Park brakes on tractor's coming from dealers' lots weren't always set to their maximum holding capability," he says. "This isn't a major problem, but it can be a safety concern if a farmer uses the parking brake on a slope, and assumes it will hold."

If a parking brake slips after the farmer has left the tractor cab, a potential disaster exists he explains. But, there is a simple solution. "Read your owners manual, understand how the park brake on your tractor is adjusted, and then make sure it's capable of holding," he says.

Adjusting brakes is usually simple and can be done right in the tractor cab he notes. This will depend on the tractor type. "Whatever the method, taking a little care can save a lot of parking problems," says Maze.

For more information on tractor parking brakes, or the work of the CSA technical committee on agricultural machinery, contact Maze at the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

Contact: Robert Maze
329-1212

Farm management video series now in district offices

When two or more generations farm together, often their biggest problem is who is managing the farm.

A pair of Alberta Agriculture videos examine the problems and offer a possible solution. "Who's Managing the Farm?" and its sequel, "Operating the Farm Family: Joint Ventures", are now available through the district video library system.

"Who's Managing the Farm?" was produced last year, but was only available from the central library in Edmonton. "One of the reasons we waited till now to add it to the districts is because we wanted to send both videos out together," says Ken Blackley, broadcast media branch information officer.

Both videos follow the same farm family and feature the same cast of characters. "Who's Managing the Farm?" dramatizes a three-generation farm family who start to see their farm as a business. Together they begin discussing future plans and goals.

"It's not so much to give specific information on farm planning, as it is to get people thinking about the subject," says Blackley. "It's a great way to get a discussion going."

In the sequel, the same family looks at forming a joint venture. The video shows some of the problems that can occur when more than one person tries to operate a farm without a formal agreement in place. "It then goes on to show how a joint venture can help solve some of these problems," says Blackley. "It also looks at some of the factors you should consider if you're planning on forming a joint venture."

Both videos can be borrowed from Alberta Agriculture district offices. They are also available for loan by writing the Broadcast Media Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Ken Blackley
427-2127

Fertilizing irrigated alfalfa subject of new factsheet

A new Alberta Agriculture publication looks at the special fertilizer requirements of growing irrigated alfalfa.

"Alfalfa has a high demand for nutrients compared to other crops," says Ross McKenzie, a soil fertility specialist. "Making sure you have the right soil fertility level is an important factor in successfully growing irrigated alfalfa."

Irrigated alfalfa will produce five to six tons of dry matter per acre if it receives enough water and nutrients he says. The new factsheet, "Fertilizer requirements of irrigated alfalfa," (Agdex 561-18) looks at those nutrients. They include nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur and micronutrients. The fact sheet also looks at how to fertilize before establishing alfalfa and after alfalfa is established.

"Soil testing and plant tissue analysis can also tell you a lot about nutrient deficiencies, soil fertility and the nutritional health of your crop, so both can be important to growing irrigated alfalfa," he says.

McKenzie also notes manure isn't recommended on established alfalfa. "Manure is better used on non-legume crops. It can burn leaves and reduce the yield and quality of your alfalfa."

The factsheet is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

For more information on fertilizing irrigated alfalfa, contact an Alberta Agriculture district office, the regional forage specialist in Lethbridge at 381-5124 or McKenzie, also in Lethbridge, at 381-5126.

Contact: Dr. Ross McKenzie
381-5124

Rural caterer's update November 24

Established and aspiring rural caterers alike can learn more about catering at a update November 24.

The day long food caterer's workshop was organized by Kerry Engel and Gail Lemke, respectively Alberta Agriculture district home economists in Westlock and Stony Plain.

"Catering is a home-based business, or second income for some farm families. Many rural caterers start out with just their home cooking experience. This update will give them ideas about food as well as more about the business and places they can go for other resources," says Engel.

Workshop topics cover a wide range of subjects. A health inspector will share the latest guidelines for "protecting provisions". Food trends and innovations of the 1990s will cover edible containers, fake fat and beef fingers. Reg Norby, an agriculture food and marketing economist, will also talk about what may be the next food products. Creative food presentation will be discussed in another session. The speaker is Gail Hall who has her own business, Gourmet Goodies, in Edmonton.

"We also want to encourage caterers to use and promote Alberta Made food products," says Engel. She will talk about Alberta Made herself during a session on nutritional menus.

"Cooking for profit" will round out the day's sessions. Gail Lovig, vice president of marketing for Company's Coming, is the speaker. The Company's Coming cookbook series was started by a former caterer. Jean Pare ran a catering business in Vermilion for many years before she published her first cookbook.

The workshop will be held at Eden Lake Golf and Country Club, west of Stony Plain. Workshop brochures are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices in the northwest region, or by

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contacting Engel in Westlock at 349-4465 or Lemke in Stony Plain at 963-6101.

Contact: *Kerry Engel* *349-4465* — *Gail Lemke* *963-6101*

Queen Mother scholarship recipients named

Three former Alberta 4-H members are the 1992 recipients of the prestigious Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother scholarships.

Lorena Reinhardt of Rockyford, Stacey Sellers of Innisfree and Clarence Wildeboer of Lacombe will each receive $1,500 awards in recognition of their academic achievements, leadership abilities and contributions to their communities. All three are in their second year of post-secondary studies.

Reinhardt is in her second year of a BSc in agriculture at the University of Alberta. Her major is animal science. She has continued her 4-H involvement by joining the University of Alberta 4-H Alumni. Reinhardt has also been active with the Alberta Paint Horse Association and the Alberta Charolais Association. She plans to attend veterinary school and eventually have a large animal practice.

Sellers is also in her second year of a BSc in agriculture. Her major is agriculture business management. As a member of the Innisfree Crafty Fingers and Birch Lake Bits 'n Bites 4-H clubs she held many leadership roles. At the University of Alberta, she is involved in many activities including the 4-H Alumni, Agriculture Club and Ceres Fraternity.

Wildeboer is also in his second year of study at the University of Alberta. His major is genetics. Throughout high school he was very involved in his school's student union and various sports activities. He was also active in his church and youth group. During his eight years as a member of the Lacombe 4-H Dairy Club, he held many different club offices. Wildeboer is also proficient in French and has won two bursaries to study university-level French.

The Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Scholarship was established in 1985 as a gift to the Queen Mother from the Alberta government when she attended the World Angus Forum in Edmonton. The scholarship recognizes and assists deserving young Albertans in the first, second, third or fourth years of study in the fields of agriculture, agricultural engineering, home economics or veterinary medicine (large animal).

The scholarship is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, administered by the department's 4-H branch and given out in the name of Her Majesty, the Queen Mother.

Contact: *Elaine Hawrelak* *427-2541* — *Lori McRae* *427-2541*

Agri-News briefs

Provincial poultry, rabbit and cavy show Dec.4-6

The 78th annual Alberta provincial poultry, rabbit and cavy show will be held in Calgary December 4 through 6. The three day event features over 500 different classes for Bantams, cavies, Fancy pigeons, Guinea fowl, Homing pigeons, pheasants, poultry, rabbits, turkeys and waterfowl. The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede will also host the world rooster crowing contest. Admission is free. The show is open to the public starting at 8 a.m. on each of the days. The show closes at 10 p.m. on Friday, 6 p.m. on Saturday and 4 p.m. on the final day. Schools and clubs are encouraged to visit. For more information, contact Joan McEvoy in Calgary at 261-0162, or toll-free at 1-800-661-1260.

Herscovici speaks at Stock Growers convention

Freelance journalist Alan Herscovici who wrote an expose of the animal rights movement is one of the main speakers at next month's Western Stock Grower's Association (WSGA) annual convention. The association's 97th annual convention, short course and trade fair is in Red Deer December 10 through 11. The convention theme is communication, the key to our future. Among the topics on the convention agenda are: complimentary wildlife and cattle grazing; free market versus government planning; accuracy in the media; big government and taxes; and, affirmative attitude. For more information, contact the WSGA office in Calgary at 250-9121 or FAX 250-9122.

Olds College tropical tour expanded

Olds College will offer two more Central American tours in early 1993. They follow a successful tour held in February 1992. The growers' tour and a new tropical agro-ecology tour both will go to Costa Rica. Both are 18-day tours tailored for professionals with agricultural, horticultural or environmental backgrounds. However, anyone with a keen interest in the subject matter is encouraged to take part. The growers' tour will continue to focus on production, management and marketing ornamentals, fruits, vegetables and spices. The new agro-ecology tour will include soil and water conservation, agro-environmental development plans, reforestation and livestock production. Olds college's sister school, the Costa Rican Technological Institute (ITCR) will provide guides and instructors for both tours. Geraldine Byrne, Olds College's land sciences project manager, will be the tour co-ordinator. For more information, contact Byrne or Richmond Godfrey, project co-ordinator international education, in Olds at 556-8368 or 556-8254.

4-Hers compete in Colorado

Four Alberta 4-Hers competed at the recent Western 4-H Round-up Judging Competition in Colorado. The team members were Geoff Hoar of Innisfail, Denis Kotowich of St. Paul, Gene Rawe of Strome and Tammy Young of Camrose. They earned the trip last fall at a provincial livestock judging competition. "Although this year's team didn't place high in the competition, they did learn more about livestock industry and 4-H in the United States," says Henry Wiegman, provincial 4-H livestock specialist. The Albertans were the only Canadian team at the competition that features more than 30 4-H and Future Farmers of America teams from throughout the United States. The team was accompanied by Raymond Zimmer of Daysland, a 4-H leader, and Janet Kerr, Lamont district agriculturist and former 4-H regional specialist. For more information, contact Wiegman in Edmonton at 427-2541, or Kerr in Lamont at 895-2219.

Barley Commission first annual meeting December 2

The Alberta Barley Commission will hold its first annual meeting December 2 in Red Deer. The one-day meeting includes a business meeting and election of directors as well as speakers. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Capri Inn. To pre-register for the meeting, call the commission office in Calgary at 291-9111, or 1-800-265-9111.

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 9, 1992

Merchandising key to selling low quality crops

While it may be a poor year to sell grain, take the next step and merchandise your crop says an Alberta Agriculture regional market economist.

"This year's weather conditions have put a range of grades in most people's bins, and more lower grades than anyone would like," says Doug Walkey. "To make the best of what you've got, merchandise your 1992 crop."

Merchandising is actively pursuing the best possible market he says. "The process is straight forward. Know what you've got. Let others know what you've got. Set some realistic targets, and act when the opportunity arises."

Knowing what you've got starts as soon as the crop is in the bin by taking samples. The Canadian Grain Commission will grade samples at no charge. "Knowing what your grade is is important. If you don't know what your actual grade is, you may miss an opportunity to sell," he says.

He also advises to keep grain stocks of different grades separate. "This can put an extra demand on your bin space, but that can pay off by giving you flexibility in marketing. For example, slow farm deliveries may force a high price for premium grades. If you've blended in your poor stocks, you can't take advantage of the bonus."

There are also bargaining rights in separate good and bad grades. "Offer your crop as a package to buyers, and compare the return on the total crop. Having your low grades separate gives the buyer much more opportunity to blend it off in stocks he may have. You'll likely be offered a more competitive price on the total package."

Walkey suggests talking to as many buyers as possible and leaving samples with them. "Let them know how much you have on hand and what price you're willing to sell for. This helps your buyers let you know when an opportunity arises. The more eyes watching the market for you, the better."

Farmers shouldn't assume just crushers and feedlots will take the poorer quality grains. Most grain buyers represent a number of grain users, with different grade needs. Neighbors, local shortages and niche markets may also be excellent market opportunities.

While some low quality grains can be difficult to store, farmers should consider holding them until mid-winter. "Many farmers will sell poor grains right off the combine just to get rid of it. This lowers the price accordingly. Prices may recover somewhat after the true nature of the harvest is known," Walkey says.

Walkey also advises farmers to set target prices for all their crops. In a year with a lot of low quality grains, the lower grades will be heavily discounted. "Given your cost of production, set some prices you'd be willing to accept. When the target prices are available, **sell**," he says.

Alberta Agriculture district offices offer a wide range of marketing courses. These include market outlooks, market seminars and market simulations. Also available are sources of market information. For more information, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district or regional office.

Contact: Doug Walkey
340-7612

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Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Grade samples needed for GRIP quality adjustment

The Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) does cover crop quality losses, but producers need to meet certain conditions to collect those benefits.

"Grade samples are needed for farmers to receive a quality adjustment payment from GRIP," says Rick McConnell of the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation (AHCIC). "Your grain must be sold through a licensed grain company, if it hasn't been adjusted by the AHCIC."

Because of unusual weather, the grade of grains harvested in Alberta is substantially below normal in many parts of the province. In response, the corporation relaxed the criteria for sampling grain to determine its grade for quality adjustment. "However," says McConnell,"there are still rules."

Farmers who plan to sell grain to unlicensed buyers, such as a neighbour or feedlot, need to have that grain sampled by an Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance adjustor. "If they don't, they could lose the benefit of the quality adjustment," says McConnell.

For example, if a farmer sold feed grade wheat to a neighbour before an AHCIC inspection, the grain would be considered as a number two grade. If the grain had been adjusted by AHCIC, or sold through a licensed grain company, the amount of feed wheat sold would be adjusted down. This could increase any GRIP payout.

The same procedure applies if farmers feed a portion of their 1992 production to their own livestock. "If there is a reasonable amount left in storage, the grade of what's left can be taken and represent what's been sold or fed," says McConnell. "If you sell through the licensed grain buyer, the grade agreed to by you and the company would be accepted by AHCIC," he adds.

If no sample is available, that doesn't mean the farmer is ineligible for crop or revenue insurance benefits. "What it does mean is that the grade would be assumed equal to the insured grade and no adjustment for quality could be made," he says.

Farmers can contact their local Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance office for more information.

Contact: Rick McConnell
782-4661

Hog prices to stay above last year's

Hog prices in Alberta likely won't drop to the lows of last fall and winter says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Prices should stay higher particularly because of the lower Canadian dollar this year," says Ron Gietz.

The hog market is expected to bottom out in the December-January period. This repeats a very consistent seasonal pattern. Gietz forecasts a $1.15/kg monthly average price for Index 100 hogs in December. This compares to $1.02 for 1991. He expects the price will dip to $1.10/kg in January. "The forecast is based on a gradual increase of the Canadian dollar to 82 cents U.S. by February," he notes.

Strong demand for slaughter hogs and pork coupled with a weaker Canadian dollar were good news in the Canadian market through the fall. By early October, Alberta Index 100 hog prices were above the previous year's. "This suggested that there was more good news than bad news in the market, at least compared to 1991," says Gietz.

However, there is bad news on the supply side. The U.S. swine herd continues to expand, turning out record pork supplies. While demand has been strong this fall, November could provide a test of that strength he says.

"In November, weekly marketings are expected to reach two million head in the U.S., or just slightly below the annual hog output of Alberta," he says. "Slaughter hog prices are likely to face some downward pressure during the late fall, and could remain at a lower level through much of the winter."

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

Quality oat demand high

Any producers with high quality oats should be able to command higher than normal premiums says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Strong demand for high quality oats should remain through the rest of the crop year," says Larry Ruud. "There's no rush to market your number one and two oats."

Finland and Sweden will be small players in the export market due to decreased production and lower quality. "This leaves Canada as the only major supplier to the export market," he adds.

Despite early frost and snow, Canadian oat production is still estimated as substantially higher than the 1991 crop. Current estimates are for a 2.8 million tonne crop, up 57 per cent from last year.

The Canadian barley crop is forecast to drop about nine per cent from last year. Barley usage may also drop depending on how much feed wheat is used he says. "Current estimates are 30 to 50 per cent of the Canadian wheat crop will fall into the feed category. Plus, feed wheat continues to sell at a five to 10 dollar per tonne discount to barley in the domestic market."

At least three factors will influence feed grain prices over the winter Ruud adds. World coarse grain supplies are three per cent higher this year and there's a significant amount of feed wheat available globally. More than ample corn supplies will be a negative for local feed prices.

As well, the U.S. corn harvest is behind its normal pace and won't be complete until well into November. "Consequently, corn prices might not bottom until the end of November or early December. Our barley and feed wheat are overpriced relative to corn," he notes.

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The amount of feed wheat available will also depress local feed prices. "Feed wheat and barley prices should settle at about $75 to $80 per tonne," he estimates.

Contact: Larry Ruud
427-5386

Farmers like conservation planning and want more

From zero to popular in less than three years is a good speed rating for farm conservation planning says an Alberta Agriculture conservation specialist.

Three years ago when the Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) was signed, conservation planning was written in as a major program emphasis. Today hundreds of Alberta farmers have been part of either group or one-on-one conservation planning exercises.

"While the farmers who attended workshops gave positive feedback, we felt we needed to do a broader evaluation," says Goddard, one of the architects of Alberta Agriculture's farm conservation planning program. So Goddard, along with Germar Lohstraeter, a conservation planning technologist, surveyed 130 farmers who attended farm conservation planning workshops or got one-on-one planning help by mid-1991.

Erosion and degradation concerns and economics were the main reasons those farmers gave for trying farm conservation planning. More than half of them—53 per cent—had already used the agronomic recommendations that came from planning and about one third—34 per cent—had carried out recommendations to reduce their soil erosion and degradation concerns. "We expect more recommendations to be carried out the longer a farm has the plan," he says.

A majority of those farmers also say the process should be more available to their peers. "Eighty-five per cent said farm conservation planning should be made more accessible, but when asked if farmers should be required to have a conservation plan, the number dropped to 34 per cent," says Goddard.

Goddard presented the results of the evaluation survey last week at a conference in Regina. The "Erosion: causes to cures" short course and conference ran November 2 through 4.

"Alberta's approach to farm conservation planning has been different than in other places where it has been linked to government incentive programs," notes Goddard. "Here, we've looked at conservation planning as part of farm management and linked it to crop and livestock management. "

In group workshops or one-on-one planning, farmers use aerial photographs, soil surveys and other information such as municipal assessments to put together a farm conservation plan. They also discuss farming practices and conservation tips.

The group sessions have proved popular notes Goddard. Two of the next workshops are planned for Crossfield on November 12 and Stettler on November 19. For more information on farm conservation planning, contact a regional soil conservation co-ordinator.

Goddard also made another presentation—with research agronomist Sheilah Nolan—to the Regina conference on information gathered using a rainfall simulator. Another Alberta Agriculture presenter was Douwe Vanderwel, who discussed a terracing project used to control water erosion.

Contact: Tom Goddard
422-6530

ADC and AHCIC merged

The boards of the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) and the Alberta Hail and Crop Insurance Corporation (AHCIC) have been merged, and a new organization formed to oversee the combined operations.

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan announced the merger and formation of the Agrifinancial Management Corporation (AMC) in late October.

"This merger fulfills two key goals for the people of Alberta," says Isley. "First, we promised less government, and this merger will mean just that. The two organizations will be overseen by one board of directors, an amalgamation of the current two."

Harold Thorton will be the chairman of the new AMC board. Bob Splane will be president and managing director of the new organization. Glenn Gorrell continues as the general manager of the hail and crop operation. The new organization will report to the associate minister of agriculture.

McClellan says long-term service improvements will result from the merger. "The two organizations fit well together because they are both in the business of helping farmers manage risk. The two organizations will merge field administrative operations over time, including the sharing of support staff, making access to services easier for our farm clients."

The new organization will work closely with Alberta Agriculture's extension services towards the long-term co-operative goal of creating convenient ag service centres for farmers across Alberta. "The ultimate goal is for farmers to enjoy 'one-stop shopping' for all agricultural services in most districts across Alberta," says McClellan.

"Farmers are becoming more sophisticated," she adds. "They know that their financial decisions are interrelated—credit, insurance, income protection, forward contracting—are all part of managing risk."

The former head offices of the two corporations will remain as administrative offices in Camrose and Lacombe.

Contact: Bob Splane
679-1302
Brad Klak
427-2137
Maureen Osadchuk
422-9156

Using a conventional airseeder for special crops

Alberta farmers are looking at ways to use their existing machinery to take advantage of market opportunities in special crops says an Alberta Agriculture project engineer.

"One common concern is if metering systems on conventional grain drills can handle special crops," says Robert Maze of the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge.

The centre, with help from the Alberta Wheat Pool, Flexi-Coil, Harmon, Morris, New Noble Services and Alberta Agriculture's special crop group, is looking particularly at whether an airseeder metering system can handle special crops.

Using buck wheat, canary seed, caraway, pinto beans, safflower, sunflower and yellow mustard, the center evaluated metering systems used on airseeder tanks. "Test results indicated these systems provided uniform metering of special crops, with only slight damage when metering pinto beans. Maximum seed crackage was less than seven per cent for all four of the systems," he notes.

As well as damage caused by metering systems, the centre staff also came up with metering tables for manufacturers. Typically, metering tables for crops such as caraway and safflower are not included in owner's manuals, so farmers don't have a starting point for setting their meters. "This will give farmers a better idea of metering systems," says Maze. Metering tables for the systems tested are available through the centre and the co-operating manufacturers.

"Assuming similar seed sizes or densities will use the same meter setting is a mistake and can cause major seeding rate errors," he adds.

Seed damage in the distribution system and seed depth uniformity are other problems farmers can face when using conventional grain equipment to seed special crops. Both, particularly damage in the air distribution system, will need to be researched says Maze. "Damage in the distribution system will depend on the system that's used."

Seed depth uniformity is more of a concern with shallow seeded crops and crops that require uniform emergence. "While air seeders are good for seeding depth uniformity, they are still not up to the standards of precision row crop seeders. Farmers should understand how crops are going to respond to variations in seeding depth before using conventional equipment," advises Maze.

For more information on seeding special crops using conventional equipment, or for other farm machinery concerns, call the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 329-1212.

Contact: Robert Maze
329-1212

Agri-News briefs

Demand for feeder lambs strong

The long term outlook in the lamb market is positive says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Prices are expected to strengthen considerably in the new year," says Jo Ann Sandhu. "Demand for feeder lambs is likely to remain strong with prices expected to increase marginally in November," she adds. The short term outlook for slaughter lambs is also positive. "Wholesale prices for 55 pound carcasses held relatively firm in the U.S," she notes. With slaughter lamb prices expected to heat up in 1993, she says, breeding stock prices are expected to increase. "Producers who expect to expand their flocks next year should buy as early as possible," Sandhu says. For more information, contact Sandhu in Edmonton at 427-5387.

Weekly market commentaries on 1-800 line

Weekly market commentaries prepared by Alberta Agriculture market analysts are now available on the same 1-800 number as the Alberta Grain Commission's market price reports. The market commentaries will be prepared and recorded every Friday morning. They can be heard by calling toll-free 1-800-661-2474, or 436-4941 in the Edmonton area. Three weekly commentaries are available: grains and oilseeds, livestock and special crops. "You need a touch tone telephone," notes David Walker, head of the market analysis branch. Each commentary has a code to be dialed after reaching the main number. The grains and oilseed code is 21, the livestock number is 22 and special crops is 23. The Alberta Grain Commission market price reports are at the same general number. For more information, contact Walker in Edmonton at 427-5387, or Sharon McKinnon at the Grain Commission at 427-7329.

Special crop quality relatively poor

As expected with early bad weather, special crop quality is relatively poor this year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "While there aren't any official estimates, it looks like the

Cont'd on page 5

majority of both peas and lentils will grade number three or below in Alberta," says Al Dooley. "Mustard seed, by contrast, seems to have come through the poor weather of late summer in pretty good condition," he adds. Some estimates put the 1992 Alberta mustard crop at about 80 per cent number two grade or better. The impact of the early frost on the alfalfa seed crop seems to be large he adds. "Yields in Alberta are going to be very poor. In the south, average yields may be about 100 pounds per acre. Peace region yield will likely average close to 50 pounds," Dooley says. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-5387.

High total of feed wheat in 1992

Early frost and snow means over half of Alberta wheat will probably grade as feed. "That estimate compares to two per cent feed wheat in 1991, one per cent in 1990 and a seven-year average of 12.63 per cent between 1984 and 1991," says Larry Ruud, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. Canada isn't the only country that has been hit by bad weather this fall he adds. "The U.S., Europe and the former Soviet Union all had a weather damaged wheat harvest." Ruud says initial payments for feed wheat probably won't move much beyond current levels. "Increased supplies of feed wheat and corn globally will make it difficult to move our feed wheat at prices much beyond the current level," he says. However, the export program for grades of milling wheat should be strong through the coming year he notes. Initial payments for these grades are currently low relative to international wheat prices. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Canola futures to range between $280 and $310

Canola futures will likely trade in the $280 to $310 per tonne range over the coming months says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Crusher and offshore demand over the winter, and soybean crop development in South America will be the factors to watch for price changes," says Larry Ruud. More European canola could move into central Canada and Japan, if the price spread between Canada canola and European canola moves too far out of line he says. "Basis levels are lower than normal for this time of year and should continue at these levels over the winter," he adds. He advises producers to shop around for basis, grade and dockage levels. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Trade steady, but no feeder cattle price gains

Heavy feeder cattle are expected to trade fully steady during the rest of 1992 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "But large price gains aren't expected," says Ron Gietz. From January onwards, heavy feeder cattle prices are forecast to stay the same or drop slightly. A slight rebound of feeder calf prices is expected by late November. "As volumes decline, prices should come up from seasonal lows," he says. Calf prices were stronger in 1992. "That's hardly surprising since fed cattle prices were at least $10/cwt. higher in October this year than last year. An ample supply of feed quality grain on the Prairies has also helped spur the demand for feeder cattle," he says. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Keys to planning for success conference November 27

Creating and using a positive approach is the theme for "keys to planning for success", an agriculture conference presented by the Taber and Vauxhall Alberta Agriculture district offices. The conference is November 27 at the Taber Community Centre. Select-a-sessions will cover four areas: the individual, the family, the farm business and the agriculture industry in general. Two of the feature speakers are Paul Mann, writer and host of "The Canadian Farmer" and Gordon Colledge, family support co-ordinator with Lethbridge Community College. Conference participants will also enjoy the great tastes of an Alberta Made hors d'oeuvres table and an Alberta Made banquet. The conference is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, the Taber Agricultural Service Board and Taber and District Further Education Council. For more information contact Anne Luehr or Tilly Gamble at 223-7907.

St. Albert elevators designated historic resource Nov. 15

The St. Albert grain elevators will be officially designated as a provincial historic resource on November 15. The Musée Heritage Museum has planned a celebration for that Sunday afternoon. The program starts at St. Albert Place in the lobby at 1:30 p.m. Guest speaker is Ed Tyrchniewicz, dean of the University of Alberta's agriculture and forestry faculty. Guests will make a motorcade to the elevators, and then return to St. Albert Place for live music and refreshments. For more information, contact James Tirrul-Jones in St. Albert at 459-1528.

Target your market '92

Alberta Agriculture's Camrose district office is again hosting a "target your market" seminar. Target Your Market '92 will run November 25 at the Camrose Regional Exhibition. The seminar is designed to assist farmers market their crops for as much profit as possible. Coffee and registration start at 9:30 a.m. in the Red Room. In the morning, participants will look at production costs and the cost of storing grain. Lunch guest speaker is Blair Louden from Westcan Malting in Alix. The afternoon has six commodity outlooks and panel discussions. Each seminar participant will receive a seminar package that includes: a total cost breakdown, storage cost analysis, outlook summaries and a sample marketing plan for each commodity. Registration is $26.75. To register, call the Camrose district office at 679-1210.

Pulse Growers Commission annual meeting Dec. 2-4

The Alberta Pulse Growers Commission will hold its annual meeting December 2 through 4. The meeting will be held in Edmonton at the Convention Inn South. For more information, contact the commission's office in Lethbridge at 327-0626.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 16, 1992

Lab germination tests recommended

Producers thinking about using any of this year's harvest for next year's seed stock should have germination tests done says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"To ensure you don't have problems with any of the seed you will market or plant, have a germination test done," says Bill Witbeck, supervisor of seed technology. "Don't risk the outcome of next year's production by failing to have a proper germination test done on your samples."

A germination test is the best way to find out if the seed is viable. Witbeck says some producers have gotten into the habit of doing their own germination tests. "However," he says, "in years like this where frost damage, moisture content and dormancy can have a major impact on interpreting results, a trained eye is essential."

His advice is to have germination tests done by an accredited seed lab. "You can't afford to gamble on something that will determine your crop next year. Improper evaluation of seedlings could have a devastating affect on your next year's crop," he says. "Professional seed analysts have the expertise to evaluate the condition of seedlings as they grow."

There are five accredited seed laboratories in Alberta that do germination testing. They are: the Alberta Wheat Pool in Camrose and Grande Prairie; Norwest Labs in Edmonton; 20/20 Seed Labs in Nisku; and, United Grain Growers in Edmonton.

Witbeck also notes only accredited labs can assign a grade to pedigreed crops. "All seed being sold, whether pedigreed or common, must be graded," he adds. Non-accredited labs may do germination tests for common seed.

For more information, contact your Alberta Agriculture district office, or Witbeck at the Field Crops Development Centre in Lacombe at 782-4641.

Contact: Bill Witbeck 782-4641

Top 4-H judges show their stuff at Northlands

The finer points of what makes a better beef cow, sheep, light horse, pig or dairy cow isn't a mystery to Alberta's top 4-H judges.

The best of them—some 70 strong—took part in the sixth annual provincial livestock judging competition in Edmonton. The top 13 judges earned the right to go on to compete at international contests.

Aaron Grant of Olds and the Bow-Inn Beef Club was the overall competition winner. Grant is off to the Denver Western National Stock Show early in the new year. The Alberta Canada All Breeds Association (ACABA) sponsors this trip for Alberta's top 4-H judge.

A dozen other 4-Hers, based on their total overall points, were also awarded trips to international judging competitions. Eight of them will return to the judging ring quickly at the International 4-H Judging Seminar. The competition at Regina's Agribition is November 27 through 30. Going to Regina are: Roland Sawatsky

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Alberta AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

of the East Didsbury Club; Diane Petersen of the Olds Beef Club; Aleaha Longshore of Stettler and the County Livestock Judging Club; Bernadette McDonald of Stony Plain and the Duffield Beef Club; Lindsey Good of West Carstairs Beef; Tina Young of Strathmore and the Crowfoot Beef and Heifer Club; Megan Reese of Milk River and the Warner Beef Club; and, Erin Kasbohm of Westlock and the Sunniebend 4-H Beef Club.

Next year four other top qualifiers will represent Alberta at the October 1993 Western 4-H Round-up Judging Competition in Colorado. They are: Dee Arsby of the West Carstairs Beef Club; Heather Reti of Lethbridge and the Grassy Beef Club; Greg Evans of the Balzac Beef Club; and, Haley Murfin of Pincher Creek and the Foothills Beef Club.

Both the Regina and Denver trips are sponsored by Uniblok Canada, a division of Superior Feeds, in Rockyford.

"The competition was keen at this level, and throughout the province," says Hentry Wiegman, Alberta Agriculture provincial 4-H livestock specialist. "The 4-Hers going on to other competitions will gain more invaluable experience," he adds.

At the provincial competition, judging tips and livestock industry standards are discussed and illustrated by experts before competitors judge each class. Competitors are judged on written and oral reasons in placing 10 different livestock classes. Each contestant also writes a quiz.

The 4-Hers qualify for the provincial competition through regional events throughout the province.

The provincial competition is held during Edmonton Northlands Farmfair and is sponsored by Alberta Treasury Branches in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture and the host, Edmonton Northlands.

Contact: Henry Wiegman 427-2541

Alberta 4-Hers "make a difference" at national conference

Eleven Albertans discussed making a difference and challenges at a national 4-H conferences last week.

Six Alberta 4-H members and five volunteer leaders attended the annual conferences in Toronto during National 4-H Week. The members were Charles Crisp of Monitor, Christine Hamilton of Red Deer, Candace Hueppelsheuser of Blackfalds, Heather Laidlaw of Bow Island, Shelley Snyder of Lamont and Lori Wilkie of Byemoor.

They joined delegates from across Canada as well as some from the United States and Great Britain at the six-day conference. Through workshops, group discussion, presentations and interaction with speakers, they developed ideas and opinions on agricultural issues facing youth today. The conference theme was "4-H youth making a difference".

The Alberta delegates were chosen to attend this conference last spring at the provincial 4-H selections program. Trip awards are based on participation in 4-H events, and achievements and contributions in 4-H and their communities.

Five Alberta 4-H leaders were also chosen to attend the national leaders' conference. Stella Pimm of Grimshaw, Dariel McNaughton of Rumsey, Elizabeth Buday of Tilley, Mary Ann Unrau of Taber and George Andrews Jr. of Barrhead were the Alberta representatives.

"The leadership conference is designed to strengthen leadership skills and provide an opportunity for information exchange between leaders from across Canada and the United States," says Marguerite Stark, provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist. The 1992 program focused on "4-H leaders challenge the '90s".

The leaders were selected for the conference through the 4-H leader development program. The program recognizes contributions made to 4-H at the local level.

All the delegates were honored at a send-off banquet before leaving for Toronto on November 11. The Alberta Wheat Pool sponsors the banquet. This was the 45th annual.

While Shirley McClellan, the associate minister of agriculture who is responsible for the 4-H program, couldn't attend, she did send greetings to the delegates. She wished all the delegates a safe and memorable trip.

Contact: Marguerite Stark 948-8510

Farm woodlot symposium in Lac La Biche

Alberta farmers can learn more about yet another way to diversify their operation, a farm woodlot, at a symposium in Lac La Biche on December 8.

Farm woodlots have already been successful in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, but are a relatively new concept in Alberta. A number of the symposium speakers are from Saskatchewan and will share their experience and knowledge says Harvey Yoder, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lac La Biche.

Participants will get an idea of the economic returns, markets available, harvesting farm woodlots and the side benefits such as shelterbelt value, habitat and other woodlot products. Speakers will present information on how to manage a farm woodlot in conjunction with other farming operations.

The day-long symposium will open with a session on what makes a farm woodlot with an extension forester from Saskatchewan. Two farm woodlot owners from Saskatchewan will add their individual experiences with harvesting and managing farm woodlots as well as the type of equipment they use. The morning will finish with an update on harvesting timber for pulp on grazing leases and purchasing timber from private woodlot owners.

Topics for the afternoon are: why harvest trees as a crop; managing farm woodlots for wildlife; other woodlot products; and, managing aspen regeneration. One of the speakers is Mike Lalor, a private woodlot owner from Stony Plain.

The day will conclude with a discussion of how to bring land harvested for pulp into agricultural production and a presentation on the activities of the Farm Woodlot Association of Saskatchewan.

The symposium is sponsored by the Lakeland Applied Research Association (LARA) in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Forest Service and partial funding from the Canada/Alberta Forestry Partnership Agreement. The symposium will be held at the McGrane Theatre at the Alberta Vocation College in Lac La Biche. The $12 registration fee includes lunch.

Registrations must be received by December 4. Cheques can be made to LARA and sent to Box 389, Lac La Biche, Alberta, T0A 2C0.

Contact:	*Harvey Yoder* *623-5218*	*Byron Grundberg* *427-8401*

Stress of weaning, training young horse featured at conference

Anyone raising or training horses will be interested in hearing one of the featured speakers at the 1993 Horse Owners and Breeders Conference in Red Deer January 16 and 17.

Karyn Malinowski is an extension equine specialist at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. "Her main topic is how horses handle stress," says Bob Coleman, an Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist. "With an emphasis on the young horse during weaning and early training."

Malinowski is one of 15 internationally recognized speakers on the conference program. They will discuss a variety of topics of interest to horse owners and breeders.

"This conference has developed into the premier conference in North America dedicated to the horse," notes Coleman.

The conference offers sessions in specific streams for Thoroughbred, Arabian and Quarter Horse owners and breeders, as well as an all-breeds program. A wide range of topics on the conference agenda include reproduction, athletic performance, economics and promotion.

The registration rate is $75 per person, or $125 for two people from the same farm. For registration, or other information, contact Les Burwash in Calgary at 297-6650, or Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906.

Contact: Bob Coleman 427-8906

EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue contains a column from Alberta Agriculture's Farmers' Advocate. This the first of a series that will appear regularly in **Agri-News**. If you have any other questions about the columns, please contact Cliff Downey directly in Edmonton at 427-2433.

Selling livestock—and getting paid for them

by Clifford W. Downey
Farmers' Advocate of Alberta

This is the time of year when we always hear of unfortunate situations where livestock are marketed, but the producer runs into difficulty getting paid.

This column is for those of you who haven't heard of the Alberta Livestock Patrons Assurance Fund, or alternately, have heard of it but aren't sure how it applies to you.

The fund is a seller's protection plan. Since January 1 of this year, it has been funded by a 10 cent per head check-off on cattle sold in the province. For cattle sold through an auction market, the brand inspection and the check-off are automatic.

Producers can choose to opt out of the plan. In order to withdraw, a producer must provide the Minister of Agriculture, or his agent, with a written declaration at the beginning of the calendar year, or within 30 days of their first sale.

The problem of non-payment usually happens when cattle are sold privately. Often in a private sale, cattle aren't brand inspected and the seller isn't eligible for protection from the assurance fund.

To be protected by the security program certain conditions must be met. Your cattle must be brand inspected, the check-off paid on an eligible sale, sales made to licensed livestock dealers, and as a seller you didn't extend credit.

You must remember, though, that if you defer payment for your livestock for more than 48 hours from the time of sale, you aren't covered by the plan.

If you don't take full payment for your livestock within that 48 hour period, you are viewed as having extended a line of credit to the buyer. This then is a private matter between the buyer and seller.

There is another time line to keep in mind. You must notify the Minister of Agriculture, or Alberta Agriculture's regulatory services branch, within 24 hours of becoming aware you weren't paid.

Keep in mind that by legislation, you have 60 days from the day of the sale to put in a claim for default against a licensed livestock dealer. But, it's important you alert the system of the problem and take the necessary steps to put in a claim.

The maximum amount you can recover through the Livestock Patrons Assurance Fund is 80 per cent of the claim.

For more information, contact your local Alberta Agriculturedistrict office, or the regulatory services branch in Edmonton at 427-5098. That number is toll-free through your local government RITE operator.

The Alberta Farmers' Advocate can help resolve disputes and act as a mediator. As well, the Farmers' Advocate can provide advice on a varied range of topics. You can call the Farmers' Advocate's office in Edmonton at 427-2433, toll-free through your local government RITE operator.

Agri-News briefs

2nd annual winter wheat meeting

The Alberta Winter Wheat Producers Commission will hold its second annual meeting November 17 in Lethbridge. The annual meeting is open to the public and will be held at the Sven Ericksen's Family Restaurant meeting room. Among the agenda topics are winter wheat varieties, a weather outlook, winter wheat production in Montana, weed control and a Russian Wheat aphid update. Luncheon guest speaker is Ted Allen, United Grain Growers president, who will discuss grain handling and transportation efficiency. A short business meeting is also included. Registration is $10 at the door. The meeting starts at 9 a.m.

Pulse industry issues at annual meeting

The Alberta Pulse Growers Commission will hold its annual meeting December 2 through 4 in Edmonton. A number of industry issues will be up for discussion. Results from pea, fababean, lentil and bean research trials will be presented, as well as weed control information and marketing updates. A review of GATT, a Canadian Grain Commission update and future developments in the pulse industry are also on the agenda. A report on changing consumer perception about pulses will be presented by project leaders Anne Luehr and Brenda Lea McPhail. Both are Alberta Agriculture district home economists in southern Alberta. The business portion of the meeting with committee and financial reports is the morning of December 3. Elections and resolutions are scheduled for the morning of December 4. For more information, contact the commission office in Lethbridge at 327-0626; Renald Lamoureux, commission president, at 998-5273; or, Cliff Cyre, annual meeting chairman, at 349-2516.

5th Alberta Environmental Directory available

The fifth edition of the Alberta Environmental Directory is now available. The directory is reference tool on who's doing what with environmental issues in Alberta. The directory is cross-indexed alphabetically, by environmental issues and by organization. Over 420 organizations involved in environmental issues, services and activities in Alberta are listed. Detailed listings give complete contact information as well as other information. The directory is produced by the Pembina Institute for the Alberta Environmental Network. The directory is $25 for libraries, government and companies (purchase orders and invoice requests are accepted). Individuals and non-profit organizations can purchase the directory for $15 (prepaid orders only). To order, call the Pembina Institute at 542-6272, or write Box 7558, Drayton Valley, Alberta, T0E 0M0.

Safety videos available

Alberta Agriculture has added two safety video series to its central film library. The agricultural equipment operator safety series has seven videos on one tape. The videos were designed as a part of a U.S. course for farm machinery operators and are aimed at a young audience. The John Deere consolidated safety videos contains 11 separate safety programs put together into one 84-minute tape. The segments include: the dangers of by-pass starting; mowing safety; combine and tractor safety; and, personal testimonials from victims, their families and their friends. The videos are available for loan by writing the Broadcast Media Branch at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Beef parasite report available

A special report can help cattle producers understand the economic impact of internal parasites in their cattle. Produced by Meristem Information Resources of Calgary, the report tells which internal parasites are a problem, when they are a problem and resulting production losses. Leading scientists from public and private research institutions across Canada contributed to the report. Their analysis is that cow/calf producers should treat their cows in the fall for internal parasites to boost weaning weights. Copies of the report are available from Meristem Information Resources Ltd, 240, 6715-8 Street NE, Calgary, Alberta, T2E 7H7.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 23, 1992

Soil moisture picture dry

Nearly three-quarters of Alberta's agricultural area is dry or extremely dry says an Alberta Agriculture soil moisture specialist.

"This figure is down slightly from the 1991 fall survey when 82 per cent of the province had low soil moisture," says Allan Howard. "Overall conditions are slightly better than in both 1991 and 1990, but are drier than in 1989. The moisture picture most resembles the situation in 1983.

"Half of the soils are dry and fall into the low moisture category. There are also large areas—nearly a quarter of the province—where moisture levels are critically low."

Soils in the very low category generally have no significant moisture reserve and, at best, a shallow layer of surface moisture. Low moisture soils don't have enough moisture reserves to sustain crop growth for more than a few days.

Although soil moisture conditions are low over most of southern Alberta, the levels are higher than they have been since 1986 notes Howard. In west central Alberta, soil moisture levels are higher than they have been since 1989 but still are drier than they are most years. In the northern Peace region, conditions are wetter than average. "Conditions elsewhere are among the driest recorded since the surveys started in 1982," says Howard.

The driest areas are scattered around the province. The largest area is in east central Alberta. It extends from Athabasca to the Saskatchewan border and from Lac La Biche to Coronation. Other areas include the western Bow Valley, the western Peace River region, the Thorsby-Drayton Valley area and from Brooks north to near Drumheller. (See attached map for details.)

There are two narrow bands of high moisture. One is in the Fort Vermilion area in the far north, and the other near Waterton Lakes National Park in the southwest.

"Winter precipitation is expected, at best, to improve pond and dugout water levels or soil moisture reserves, but not both," says Howard. "Much of central and northern Alberta is at risk of having inadequate water reserves in the spring. So, spring and summer precipitation will be critical in crop success and livestock production."

Howard adds a warm, dry winter would likely expand the very low soil moisture area in the northeast as much as 80 km to the west and south.

Alberta Agriculture surveys soil moisture conditions in both the spring and fall. The 1992 fall soil moisture map is based on actual sampling of stubble fields between September 28 and October 30, plus additional rainfall analysis and information from district and regional staff between the sampling dates and November 1.

Contact: Allan Howard
381-5861

This Week

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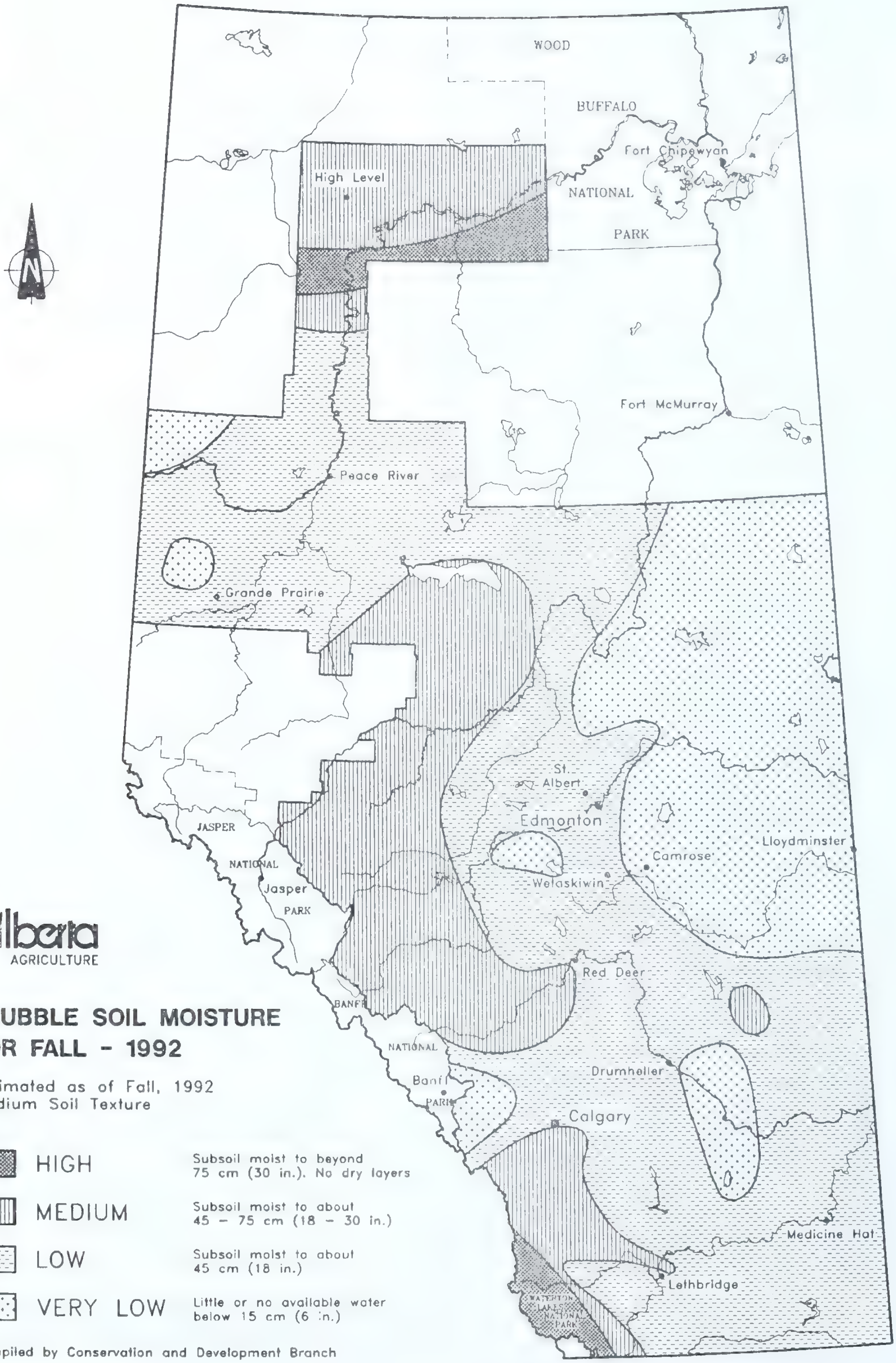
Alberta AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

STUBBLE SOIL MOISTURE FOR FALL - 1992

Estimated as of Fall, 1992
Medium Soil Texture

▩	HIGH	Subsoil moist to beyond 75 cm (30 in.). No dry layers
▥	MEDIUM	Subsoil moist to about 45 - 75 cm (18 - 30 in.)
▤	LOW	Subsoil moist to about 45 cm (18 in.)
⁚	VERY LOW	Little or no available water below 15 cm (6 in.)

Compiled by Conservation and Development Branch

Farmers can choose WCB for themselves, employees

While farming operations aren't required to have workers' compensation, farmers can voluntarily apply to have coverage for themselves or their employees.

"It's an option farmers can consider for themselves and family members and any long or short term employees that they have," says Eric Jones, an Alberta Agriculture farm safety specialist. Jones adds farmers should consider compensation coverage during seasonal activities such as seeding and harvest.

Lately farmers have been asking Jones for more details about workers' compensation. "The WCB is more than willing to help, but you must ask. Protect yourself and your operation by being aware of the options available to you," he says.

Workers' compensation protects and assists workers who are injured or disabled by a work related accident, or fall ill from work related diseases. In Alberta, workers' compensation is governed by the Workers' Compensation Act and administered by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB).

Voluntary coverage application forms are available from WCB offices in Edmonton, Calgary, Grande Prairie, Red Deer and Lethbridge. Farmers can telephone for the forms, or go to any office.

Jones notes voluntary coverage for farmers and their employees is the same coverage for employers and workers who are automatically protected by the Workers' Compensation Act. "The same regulations and conditions apply as well as the same benefits," he says.

A voluntary application requires a $25 deposit and it is applied to the assessment. The assessment rate is $7.17 for every $100 of assessable earnings. The maximum earnings for one year is $42,000. Any applications must include all workers employed on the farming operation.

Personal coverage for the owner or owners is in a separate part of the application. "This gives farmers a choice," says Jones.

A $25 deposit is required for each person applying for personal coverage. Personal coverage starts from March 1 in one year and runs to February 28 of the next year. However, billing is pro-rated if the application is made during the middle of the year.

Contact:	*Eric Jones*
	427-2186

Changed conference for changing times

A time for change is its theme, and the conference itself has a new name, date and location.

Alberta Agriculture's Managing Agriculture for Profit (MAP) conference is no longer. In its stead comes the Managing Agriculture Conference (MAC'93) from February 1 through 3, 1993 in Red Deer.

"Our farm management conference has been a popular event for farm families for the last 15 years," says Doug Barlund of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch and the project leader for the conference. "We hope the changes will allow more people to take advantage of this conference."

For the past few years the conference has been held in Kananaskis. "Holding the program in Red Deer opens the doors for many new farmers to attend, as the central location lessens their overall expenses. At the same time, the conference remains accessible to people who have attended past conferences," Barlund says.

One thing that hasn't changed is making the conference affordable for a farm couple. Registration includes all sessions and meals. "A farm couple pays $275 for the entire conference. A single participant pays $175," notes Barlund.

There's also a new registration feature. People can choose to come to just one day of the conference. Single day registration is set at $75 per person.

Conference speakers will use their expertise to discuss the conference theme of "a time for change" in agriculture. The speakers include market and financial analysts, business leaders, communicators, psychologists, humorists and farm entrepreneurs from across Canada.

Conference brochures and registration forms will be available at Alberta Agriculture district offices at the beginning of December. Or, for more information, contact Barlund or Trish Pannell at the farm business management branch in Olds at 556-4240, or write Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

Contact:	*Doug Barlund*	*Trish Pannell*
	556-4245	*556-4240*

New insecticide for treating cattle lice

Cattle producers can use a new ready-to-use pour-on treatment for lice this winter.

"This non-systemic insecticide, DeLice™, can be used on any breed or any age of cattle," says Ali Khan, an Alberta Agriculture livestock entomologist. The insecticide contains permethrin.

The new insecticide is simple to use for two reasons. The pour-on method is easy to use and the ready-to-use formulation doesn't need diluting or mixing. Still, Khan recommends reading the label instructions for proper dosages.

Another advantage is a one-day withdrawal period before slaughter he notes. "This is particularly an advantage when treating cattle in feedlots," he notes.

As well, dairy cattle can be treated during lactation and a second treatment in 14-days is recommended for optimum control.

DeLice™ can also be used in conjunction with other medications or injectables he notes.

The best time for treating lice is in November and December Khan adds. "Spring can make lice more visible, but types and methods of treatment are limited. Severe infestations of lice may cause anaemia and death in cattle. Heavily infested pregnant cows may abort their fetuses."

Two types of lice are common in Alberta. Suckling lice feed on the animal's blood by piercing the skin. Chewing lice are scavengers that feed on solid materials such as hair, loose scales from skin and clotted dried blood.

Contact: Dr. Ali Khan
427-5083

Speaker looks at conditioning the athlete horse

Conditioning the horse as an athlete is one of the featured topics at the 1993 Horse Owners and Breeders Conference in Red Deer January 16 and 17.

Craig Wood from the University of Kentucky will discuss new scientific information on exercise physiology and how it relates to conditioning the athletic horse. "His particular emphasis will be on Thoroughbreds," notes Bob Coleman, Alberta Agriculture provincial horse specialist.

An associate extension professor, Wood co-ordinates adult and youth extension programs as part of his duties. Exercise and muscle physiology are two of his main research interests. He is actively involved in many parts of the horse industry including ownership, racing, evaluation and breeding.

Wood is one of 15 internationally recognized speakers on the conference program. These experts will discuss a variety of topics of interest to horse owners and breeders including reproduction, athletic performance, economics and promotion. The conference offers sessions in specific streams for Thoroughbred, Arabian and Quarter Horse owners and breeders, as well as an all-breeds program.

"Registration is reasonable considering this is one of the foremost conferences for horse owners and breeders in North America," says Coleman. The registration rate is $75 per person, or $125 for two people from the same farm.

For registration, or other information, contact Les Burwash in Calgary at 297-6650, or Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906.

Contact: Bob Coleman
427-8906

Explaining the Farm Implement Act

by Clifford W. Downey
Farmers' Advocate of Alberta

This year I took on another role besides Farmers' Advocate. As of January 1, I became administrator of the Alberta Farm Implement Act.

These new duties are complementary to the Advocate's role, since our office was already dealing with disputes about used equipment beyond new machinery warranty.

The Farm Implement Act was passed 20 years ago in 1972. The legislation covers a number of concerns including enforcing new machinery warranties for at least a year following its first use. Among its other provisions are: assuring parts are available for 10 years from the sale; assuring parts are available in a reasonable length of time after a breakdown; and, licensing and bonding all dealers, distributors and manufacturers operating in Alberta.

Through the act farmers can apply for a "notice of failure to perform", if a new implement fails to work properly when it has been used and maintained in reasonable working conditions. This must be done within the first 100 hours or 10 days of actual use. Please call the office for more information.

The act doesn't cover equipment valued at less than $1,000; tractors smaller than 20 horsepower and their attachments; truck boxes and hoists; snow vehicles, plows and blowers; trailer and drill carriers; and, dozer blades and scrapers.

For custom operators, some warranty limits apply. The act defines a custom operator as someone who buys a new farm implement, but uses it for hire or services to others for at least 50 per cent of its annual use. A custom operator does have "failure to perform" warranty and warranty for improper design, construction or faulty materials.

The Farmers' Advocate office has a service that goes beyond the Farm Implement Act. We act as an information service for getting obsolete parts. There are often jobbers and others who manufacture these obsolete lines.

If you do have an older piece of equipment and you have no idea where to get a part for it, give us a call and chances are very good we can give you the name of a supplier.

For anyone in southern or south central Alberta, we have an office in Olds you can call at 556-4223. Northern Alberta residents, call Edmonton at 427-2188. Both numbers can be reached toll-free through your local government RITE operator.

The Alberta Farmers' Advocate can help resolve disputes and act as a mediator. As well, the Farmers' Advocate can provide advice on a varied range of topics. You can call the Farmers' Advocate's office in Edmonton at 427-2433, toll-free through your local government RITE operator.

Contact: Cliff Downey
427-2433

Agri-News briefs

Prairie Water News *fall issue available*

The fall 1992 issue of the **Prairie Water News** is now available at all Alberta Agriculture district and regional offices. The newsletter is dedicated to protecting and improving rural water supplies. Among the topics in this issue are: the untapped resource of springs; aerating dugouts naturally; alternative pasture watering systems; air lift pumping; the threat of purple loosestrife; shock chlorination; locating groundwater; and, dugouts and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA). The newsletter is a joint project of Alberta Agriculture's engineering services branch, the Saskatchewan Research Council, the Saskatchewan Water Corporation and the PFRA. For more information, contact Bob Buchanan in Barrhead at 674-8252.

EAT institute annual meeting December 4

The EAT Institute will hold its annual meeting December 4 at the Stockman Centre in Calgary. EAT stands for the excellent agri-foods team. Among its objectives are educating children and adults about the food industries and rural environment; promoting achievements in agri-science, technology and conservation; and, providing career development opportunities. Annual meeting participants will hear about a plan for an EAT site. Also at the meeting, the techno-advisory committee will report, financial statements will be presented and next year's strategic plans will be discussed. For more information, call 272-4100 or write R.R. 7, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2G7.

Rural crime watch video available

Discover what you can do to help stop crime as well as how the Crime Watch program works in a 20 minute video. The video, "Rural Crime Watch: Doing our part", is now available for loan from Alberta Agriculture's central film library in Edmonton. Rural Crime Watch has been operating in Alberta since 1979. The video includes segments on deterrents, property identification, branding and range patrols. To borrow the video, write the Broadcast Media Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 30, 1992

Albertans invited to January Creating Tomorrow conference

Alberta's agriculture ministers are inviting all Albertans to get involved in the final stage of a consultation process to set the future direction of the province's agriculture and food industry.

The Creating Tomorrow conference will be held at the Westerner Altaplex in Red Deer January 6 through 8. It's the culmination of a process begun when an advisory group representing a cross section of the whole industry drafted a paper called "Creating Tomorrow: A vision of Alberta's agriculture and food industry".

The paper was released in the spring. Since then, Albertans have had their say through a series of 14 public meetings that were held across the province during the late summer and fall.

"The January conference is about turning all the ideas we heard into action," says Alberta Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley. "We'll be taking all the input from the consultation meetings and coming up with a shared industry/government vision and the goals we want to pursue."

The industry advisory group will use the conference results to prepare guidelines for future provincial agriculture and food policies. As well, the information will be used for Toward 2000 Together, the provincial government's economic development strategy.

"We were very pleased with the diversity of people who came to the Creating Tomorrow meetings," says Shirley McClellan, associate agriculture minister. "Our industry knows its stakeholders go beyond farmers, agribusinesses and food processors. We hope to have the same broad range of people at the January conference."

Everyone who participated at one of the earlier meetings will receive a registration brochure for the conference. Registration information will also be available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. As well, people interested in the conference can contact the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at 451-5959, or FAX 452-5385.

Contact:		
	Evelyn Shapka *427-2417*	*Barb Stroh* *427-2417*
	Brad Klak *427-2137*	*Maureen Osadchuk* *422-9156*

Research looks to prolong meat's shelf life

Lengthening the storage life of meat would have major benefits for Alberta's value-added meat processing industry says a University of Alberta researcher.

Alberta is the biggest red meat producer in Canada. Much of that meat is shipped to distant markets across the continent as well as overseas. Currently the meat is shipped as chill stored, vacuum packaged wholesale cuts. The modified atmosphere packaging extends shelf life and protects meat from bacterial contamination. But, that shelf life can't be accurately estimated.

"Removing air from the package or replacing a portion of it with carbon dioxide favors the growth of lactic acid bacteria which act in extending storage life," says Michael Stiles, a food microbiology professor in the University of Alberta's food science department. "However, the meat ultimately spoils—ironically by the same bacteria that increase its shelf life—and its storage life cannot be accurately predicted unless the lactic acid bacteria can

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be controlled."

Controlling lactic acid bacteria through biotechnology is the basis of Stiles' current research project. The project is funded in part by the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) through its Farming for the Future research program. Stiles presented some of his research results at the recent Farming for the Future conference in Red Deer.

Lactic acid bacteria have been used for many years as starter culture in making cheese, yogurt and other cultured dairy products as well as fermented meats and vegetables. "In meats without added sugar, these bacteria do not produce sufficient lactic acid to inhibit other bacteria. They do, however, produce antibacterial compounds known as bacteriocins," says Stiles.

Stiles says he believes manipulating the genetic factors for bacteriocin production are key to producing strains of lactic acid bacteria that will reliably extend the storage life of meats.

"In addition to extended storage life, the safety of meats is a major interest," says Stiles. "There is no reason to believe that the scope of this antibacterial activity cannot be extended to include harmful bacteria such as *Salmonella* and *E. coli* [a strain causes 'hamburger disease']." He adds the natural preservative effect of bacteriocins also suggests nitrites can be replaced as a meat preservative.

Further study, he says, is required to assess the potential of lactic acid bacteria as a starter culture in meats.

"Exploring innovative techniques such as biotechnology to improve the quality and safety of Alberta's meats, and other foods, is instrumental in opening doors to new and expanded markets for Alberta's agricultural processing industry," says Patrick Marce, information officer for Alberta Agriculture's research division.

The Farming for the Future conference focused on agri-food diversification in Alberta. Research results in crop, livestock and processing agricultural products were highlighted.

Contact:	*Dr. Michael Stiles*	*Patrick Marce*
	492-3236	*427-1956*

Harvesting different products from the same crop

A University of Calgary researcher has taken the concept of crop diversification to a different plane.

Maurice Moloney, a biological sciences professor and a plant biotechnology researcher, has used a novel approach to show multiple products can be derived from a well-established single crop. In this case, canola.

"The impetus for my research came from the recognition that the traditional method of crop diversification, which is based on introducing new plant species into a region, takes a long time and poses several problems," says Moloney.

Instead, by using biotechnology, Moloney has shown seeds of existing crops can be modified to produce a number of products. It also achieves the same goals of crop diversification faster and more economically. "Introducing alternate crops requires an intricate process of developing adapted cultivars, training growers and developing market outlets—all of which take more time and resources than the method I am suggesting."

Moloney's research will diversify canola's products without changing the plant. Currently, the oilseed crop is grown widely in Alberta for two basic uses. Canola oil is used mainly for cooking oil and in salad dressing. Canola meal is the by-product from oil extraction. It has a relatively high protein content and is used as a supplement in livestock rations.

Moloney's work focused on producing two high-value therapeutic proteins from canola. These expected new products will be of interest to the pharmaceutical and biochemical industries.

"The results of this research suggest possibilities for enhancing the quality of the canola meal Alberta produces and for stimulating the creation of new pharmaceutical and biochemical industries in the province," he says.

Moloney presented his research results to the recent 1992 Farming for the Future conference in Red Deer. His research was partially supported by the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) through its Farming for the Future program.

Contact:	*Dr. Maurice Moloney*	*Patrick Marce*
	220-6823	*427-1956*

Game farming research reviewed

Despite several setbacks, game farming is a firmly established industry in Alberta and promises to make a solid contribution to diversifying the province's agricultural economy says a University of Alberta researcher.

Robert Hudson, a professor in the university's animal science department, presented a summary of game farming research results at the recent 1992 Farming for the Future conference held in Red Deer. The conference, sponsored by the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute (AARI), focused on agri-food diversification in Alberta. Research results in crop, livestock and processed agricultural products were highlighted.

"Since 1974, I have watched game farming and ranching transformed from a pipe-dream to a recognized agricultural industry in Alberta," says Hudson. He says he hopes the Livestock Diversification Act of 1990 has "laid to rest the treatment of game farming as a policy issue".

A 1975 study at Elk Island National Park first drew Hudson's attention to the agricultural potential of wildlife. In that study, researchers found a higher productivity in wild ruminants than in seasonally grazed livestock. This pioneering research formed the basis for further scientific investigations.

The Farming for the Future program has funded a number of game farming research projects. Hudson covered a number of

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these research projects in his presentation including thermal tolerance, digestive capacity, foraging efficiency, seasonal energy requirements, mixed species grazing and game products.

"The sustained growth of the international game industry over the past 25 years indicates a bright future," he says. But he also cautions, "The industry serves specialty markets and will never supplant conventional farm livestock."

Current commercial opportunities for game farming include international markets for breeding stock, venison, antler velvet and other specialty products.

Game farming research is continuing, particularly on methods for managing wildlife in Alberta's harsh climate. Many game animals can eat a wide variety of native plants and low quality feeds. Some can also forage through the snow, allowing the game farmer to graze them year-round.

Contact:	*Dr. Robert Hudson*	*Patrick Marce*
	492-3232	*427-1956*

Agricultural awareness teachers recognized at national conference

Excellence in agricultural awareness teaching was recognized at a recent national conference in Edmonton.

For the first time, the National Agriculture in the Classroom conference honored teachers for their outstanding efforts in bringing agriculture into their classrooms. One teacher from each of Canada's 10 provinces was honored.

"As organizers and people involved and committed to agricultural awareness, we hope recognizing these teachers will encourage others to get involved in the rewarding partnership of agriculture and education," says Betty Gabert. Gabert is Alberta Agriculture's Agriculture in the Classroom co-ordinator and was one of the conference organizers.

The 10 teachers honored were: Karen Fellows, Williams Lake, British Columbia; Connie Dersch-Gunderson, Fort Macleod, Alberta; Dwain Drew, Carrot River, Saskatchewan; Pat Wyatt, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Pat Marcotte, Wahnapitac, Ontario; Marc-Andre Jolicoeur, Sillery, Quebec; Fred Welsh, Bristol, New Brunswick; Theresa deBont, Inverness County, Nova Scotia; Marilyn Hudson, O'Leary, Prince Edward Island; and, Leo Lewis, Bishop Falls, Newfoundland.

Alex Graham, past president of Prairie Pools Incorporated, presented the awards. Prairie Pools was a major conference sponsor and covered the awards for and travel expenses of the winning teachers.

Alberta Education officially endorsed Alberta's Agriculture in Classroom program during the awards evening. Roger Palmer, assistant deputy minister, made the announcement. "This approval served to both highlight and strengthen the partnership of agriculture and education in Alberta," notes Gabert.

Gabert adds the conference that attracted more than 200 delegates from across Canada as well as the United States was a "tremendous success since it brought agricultural industry representatives in contact with teachers to share ideas of how to best increase agricultural awareness in Canadian classrooms".

Delegates were given many opportunities to share ideas. One forum was through more than 25 round table discussions. Delegates also heard from Mary Schultz, one of the top U.S. agricultural awareness teachers.

Other major conference sponsors included Alberta Agriculture, the Agriculture Ambassador Program, the Alberta Cattle Commission, Alberta Pool, the Royal Bank of Canada and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA).

"One of the bonuses of the conference was that representatives of the major sponsors played an active role at the conference. They were speakers, attended sessions, brought exhibits and were really involved," says Gabert.

Contact:	*Betty Gabert*
	427-2402

Food safety and your Christmas turkey

Thaw, stuff, cook and serve a turkey sounds easy, but those steps all have food safety precautions says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"Sometimes your kitchen is the weakest link in the food safety chain. One of your best holiday gifts is to take care when preparing the turkey," says Linda St. Onge of the home economics branch.

The Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency recommends two ways of thawing a turkey: in the refrigerator or using the cold water method. "Using the refrigerator takes a lot of time, about 10 hours per kilogram of meat," notes St. Onge.

In the cold water method, start by leaving the turkey in its wrapping. Cover the turkey with cold water. That water should be replaced every few hours. Thawing takes about two hours per kilogram of meat.

St. Onge says a turkey can also be thawed in the microwave. "Check the manufacturer's instructions," she advises.

"Once the turkey is thawed keep it in the refrigerator and cook it within 48 hours," she adds. "Never leave it at room temperature."

A turkey should be stuffed immediately before cooking, never the night before. "For maximum safety, cook the stuffing separately from the bird. Because warm stuffing creates an ideal environment for bacterial growth, its presence in the bird can be hazardous before, during and after the turkey is cooked," she says.

If stuffing is cooked in a separate casserole dish, add extra liquid so it will be moist enough to stick together. Add 25 millilitres (ml) [two tablespoons] of liquid for each 250 to 375 ml (one to one

Cont'd on page 4

and a half cups) of dressing. Removing some of the juices from the turkey's roasting pan is a good choice she says. The casserole stuffing should be cooked in the oven for the last half hour of roasting time.

On the other hand, if you prefer to stick with the traditionally stuffed bird, St. Onge has more advice. "Once the turkey is cooked, immediately remove all the stuffing. If stuffing isn't removed it may stay warm long enough for bacteria to contaminate the leftover turkey and stuffing. Leftover stuffing must be refrigerated and used within three days."

The best roasting temperature is 325°F (160°C). Higher temperatures cause protein toughening and shrinkage. Lower temperatures aren't recommended because naturally present bacteria might not be killed.

"Once the turkey has started roasting it must be completely cooked before removing from the oven," St. Onge says. The turkey can be covered with a loose tent of aluminum foil. During the last half hour of cooking, remove foil to baste and allow the bird to brown.

The most reliable way to test "doneness" is with a meat thermometer. An internal thigh muscle temperature of 185°F (85°C) indicates the turkey is cooked. The internal temperature of stuffing should be at least 165°F (74°C). After cooking, keep the turkey hot, above 140° F (60°C) or refrigerate at below 40°F (4°C). "The simple rule is keep it hot, or refrigerate it," says St. Onge.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Freezing eases holiday food rush

Your freezer can be a big help in the busy Christmas season says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"Most people are cooking special meals, trying to plan ahead for holiday entertaining and purchasing foods they don't buy the rest of the year," says Linda St. Onge of the home economics branch in Edmonton. "Being able to bake ahead of time and freeze holiday foods can free up some of your time."

As far as food safety goes, you can freeze anything she says. "However, some foods don't thaw out very well and you might not be happy with a texture or flavor change."

Almost any baked item will freeze well. Exceptions are cake icings or icing layers in squares. They tend to be runny when thawed. Gelatin and custard mixtures will also separate when thawed.

St. Onge suggests testing your baked items. "Freeze one or two pieces overnight, then thaw them and see if you're happy with the result."

Casseroles, plum pudding, stuffing and many hors d'oeuvres can be prepared ahead of time, frozen and thawed when needed.

"You may notice a flavor change in potatoes and carrots after they've been frozen. So, if you have a favorite recipe, try freezing a portion the next time you make the dish for your family. Then thaw and check the result," she says.

For more food safety and holiday cooking information, contact your district home economist.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Pressure process antipasto for safety

Antipasto is very popular for entertaining and gift giving, but it could also be a very dangerous food if it isn't prepared with safety in mind says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"Antipasto must be processed in a pressure canner," says Linda St. Onge of the home economics branch in Edmonton. "This is not a step you can leave out if you want to give a safe gift."

Typically, antipasto is made with vegetables, tomato sauce or ketchup, tuna and perhaps, anchovies. The mixture is simmered together and packed into jars.

Pressure canning is key because of the type of foods used in making antipasto. Tuna, anchovies and vegetables are all low acid foods. The bacteria that causes botulism can grow in those foods. "Even though the tuna has already been canned once, you're not protected if it's part of a mixture that is still low acid and packed again into a sealed jar," she says.

The pressure processing will kill any botulism organisms. She recommends 10 lb. of pressure for 75 minutes. "As an alternative, freeze the antipasto, or ask your district home economist for information about a Jardiniere mixture. You can add it to the tuna as you use it," she adds.

If the antipasto is given as a gift, St. Onge suggests writing on the label that it has been pressure processed. "It doesn't hurt to add that after the antipasto has been opened it should be stored in the refrigerator and used within 10 days."

For more information on food safety and holiday cooking, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district home economist.

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Agri-News briefs

Ectiban-25 now available for black fly control

Ectiban-25 insecticide has been registered for use with cattle self-applicators. This replaces the temporary registration on Ectiban-25 for restricted use in severely affected black fly areas. "This is welcome news for producers in the black fly affected area, as they have been waiting for more than five years," says Ali Khan, an Alberta Agriculture entomologist. Ectiban is a non-systemic insecticide well known for quick knock down of black flies and mosquitoes. It's also registered for use on house flies, stable flies and lice. Khan says the insecticide can be used for beef cattle in pasture and on the range in back-rub self-treatment oilers, such as post-doom Lewis or buzz-off oilers. This can be for either free choice or forced use treatment. "Oiler treatment isn't for use with lactating dairy cattle," he adds. For more information, contact Khan in Edmonton at 427-5083.

Women counted in as farm operators

Just over a quarter of Alberta farmers are women. In 1991 the Census of Agriculture more than one person could be counted as a farm operator. This Statistics Canada innovation produced a more complete picture of Canadian farm operators. In Alberta, 26.7 per cent or 21,710 of farm operators were women. Most were part of farms with two operators. Just over five per cent farmed on their own. British Columbia had the highest percentage of sole female operators—13 per cent—while Prince Edward Island and Manitoba reported the lowest percentage (four). Overall, women were slightly younger than their male counterparts. In Alberta, the average age of male farmers in the census was 47.8 and women was 45.9. For more information on the Agriculture-Population Database, contact your nearest Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centre. In Edmonton, call 495-3027. The rest of Alberta can call 1-800-282-3907 toll-free.

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AGRI-NEWS

December 7, 1992

"Heritage look" to child's farm safety guide

Rural Alberta students will look back to the past in the 1992-93 version of "A Child's Guide to Farm Safety".

The guide, produced by Alberta Agriculture for the last 16 years, can be a base for a farm safety unit in elementary classrooms. "This year the theme is 'our heritage'," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, farm safety program manager.

The first section of the book invites students to look at the farms of yesterday and compare them with farms of today. "They are supposed to discuss which farms are safer and the ways the farms are more dangerous," says Kyeremanteng. "Safety has always been a concern," he adds.

Other farm safety issues are presented in the colorful guide with assistance from winning entries in a province-wide student poster and essay contest. Activities in the guide show a number of safety rules encompassing machinery, tool, animal, fire, chemical, electrical and pipeline safety.

During early December the 22 students and one class whose work are featured in the guide will be awarded prizes. The individual students are also pictured in the guide. (See attached list of prize winners.)

"We're very pleased that children help teach children in our guides. Their prevention message is very strong," says Kyeremanteng. "We always look forward to submissions for the next year's guide." Individual students and classes are invited to submit entries for the 1993-94 guide by June 30, 1993.

About 40,000 of the activity guides are now available to Alberta school jurisdictions. School superintendents have been sent order forms for their schools. Orders are handled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Teachers can also use supporting audio visual material for presenting farm safety information in their classrooms. Videos and a slide presentation are available through Alberta Agriculture's Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

The guide is sponsored by TransAlta Utilities and Nova. "We're grateful for the commitment to the health and safety of farm families these companies have shown," he says.

Contact: *Solomon Kyeremanteng*
427-2186

1992-93 student winners in "A Child's Guide to Farm Safety"

Chelsa Jensen, Grade 5, Bear Canyon Central School
Virgina McNabb, Grade 2, Manning Elementary
Crystal Burrows, Grade 5, Kennedy School, Grimshaw
Abby Meuser, Grade 3, Eaglesham Elementary
Bertha Entz, Grade 6, Twilight Colony School, Valleyview
Sanda Iseke, Grade 3, Sturgeon Heights School, St. Albert
Rene Provencal, Grade 1, Vimy School
Lynette Strilchuk, Grade 6, Round Hill School
Corey Makoloski, Grade 6, Round Hill School
Robin Tonhauser, Grade 3, Clear Vista School, Wetaskiwin
Clayton Yeast, Grade 4, Irvine School
Alicia Steinley, Grade 3, Kitchner School, Empress
Jesse Powell, Grade 5, Rolling Hills School
Aimee Williams, Grade 4, Northside Elementary, Raymond

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Derek Westman, Grade 4, Vermilion Elementary
Robin Cole, Grade 4, Kitscoty Elementary
Michael Haugen, Grade 6, Kitscoty Junior High
Lanny Anderson, Grade 3, Hughendon Public School
Shauna Zimmer, Grade 2, Strome School
Joshua Mohr, Grade 4, Sifton School, Camrose
Darby Shapka, Grade 5, Grassland Community School
Lacey Cadieux, Grade 5, Vera M. Welsh Elementary, Lac La Biche
Grade 2/3 Class (N. McKinlay teacher), Spruce View School

Agreement supports environmentally sustainable agriculture

The federal and provincial governments are expanding their efforts to promote the development and adoption of more environmentally sound production and processing practices in Alberta's agriculture and food processing industry.

A $44.12 million Canada-Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Agreement (CAESA) was announced in late November by Bill McKnight, federal agriculture minister, and Shirley McClellan, Alberta's associate agriculture minister.

The five year agreement will be funded equally by the two governments. Federal funding for the program will come from the "sustainable agriculture" component of Canada's Green Plan.

McKnight says the new agreement builds on the efforts initiated in the Canada-Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) and the Canada-Alberta Agreement on Environmental Sustainability. "The new agreement will further enhance the compatibility of Alberta's agriculture and food sector with the soil, water, atmospheric and wildlife resources. This will be accomplished through the development and adoption of more environmentally friendly technologies and management practices," he says.

McClellan says she is pleased to see the co-operative effort between the two levels of government on soil conservation and environmental protection continued in the new agreement. "This agreement will provide support to agricultural organizations, agricultural service boards and researchers. It will assist them to develop and promote improved resource and waste management practices on farms and in food processing facilities. We must work together to protect our soil and water resources for future generations," she says.

A wide range of environmentally sustainable agricultural initiatives will be supported. Demonstrations and other technology transfer activities will help producers decide how to incorporate more environmentally friendly approaches into their farming operations.

Assistance will also be provided to help the processing sector to become more environmentally sustainable. Applied research and monitoring programs will provide the information and technology needed for long-term environmental stewardship. An awareness program will help the general public understand the environmental compatibility of Alberta's agriculture and food processing industry.

An advisory committee, made up of representatives from the agriculture and food sector, will be established to guide the agreement's activities.

CAESA follows three previous agreements: the Canada-Alberta on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) 1987-1993; the Canada-Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) 1989-1992; and, the Canada-Alberta Agreement on Environmental Sustainability, 1991-92.

Contact: *Red Adam*
495-3307
Maureen Osadchuk
422-9156
Brian Colgan
422-4596

Fresh best choice for your Christmas tree

To curb the avalanche of needles from your Christmas tree, start by buying a fresh tree.

"You can make your Christmas tree last longer if you start by selecting a fresh tree," says Pam North, an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

North advises running your fingers over the branches to make sure needles aren't brittle. Another buying tip is shaking the tree she adds. "Only a few needles will fall from a fresh tree that's shaken lightly."

Different types of trees will also make a difference to how many needles end up under the tree. Scots pine is the most resistant to drying and dropping needles. White pine, Douglas fir and balsam fir also retain needles well. Spruce shed their needles more quickly.

Tree care, especially water, is also a big factor in how fresh a Christmas tree stays. "It starts when you bring your tree home," says North. First, cut off the bottom three centimetres of the trunk. This removes resin that can clog water conducting tissues and prevent water absorption. Then place the tree in water immediately.

"The container should be kept full and not allowed to dry out," she advises. "Water useage will be greatest during the first few days, so watch the water level." She adds the warmer and drier the house, the more moisture a tree will lose. As well, larger trees will use more water.

For someone buying a new tree stand, North recommends larger containers that hold about one litre of water.

Location in the home can also play a role in how the tree keeps. "If the tree is near or over a heat register, the needles will lose moisture faster and fall off. For that reason, those locations should be avoided," she says.

Contact: *Pam North*
422-1789

Conference looks at family business ownership issues

Making the transition into or out of business is a major responsibility and is often complicated for both younger and older farm families.

The first day of the 1993 Managing Agriculture Conference (MAC'93) will focus on ownership issues in family businesses. The conference is February 1 through 3 in Red Deer.

"I see this conference bridging the younger and older generations in farm business," says Doug Barlund of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds. Barlund is project leader for the MAC'93 conference. "The conference offers a wide variety of sessions focusing on topics that give both generations background knowledge and support in making difficult decisions—whether they are business or personal."

The owner/managers of Parklane Nurseries will look at two topics of interest to both generations. In "success breeds success", they'll discuss the why, when and how of transferring the family business from one generation to the next. In "mastering the art of letting go", they'll provide a detailed look at business transfer from the viewpoint of founder, successor and non-family manager.

Among the other topics of the day are: keeping the balance between goals and roles in a family business; on the road from ruin, one family's story of confronting and surviving financial difficulty; 101 ways to buy the farm; and, easing into retirement. There will also be a Canadian financial outlook session.

MAC'93 is the 16th annual management conference offered by Alberta Agriculture for farm families. This year's theme is "a time for change". Each day of the conference will feature a different aspect of change. Day one is on family business ownership, day two on planning and leadership skills, and day three on business operations, particularly marketing. Daily registration, a new feature of the conference, is available for people interested in a particular day rather than the entire conference.

"As in the past we encourage farm couples to attend the conference together," adds Barlund. "A couple's registration for the full three days is $275, and for a single person the cost is $175." This includes all meals.

Conference brochures and registration forms are available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. Or, for more information, contact Barlund or Trish Pannell at the farm business management branch in Olds at 556-4276, FAX 556-7545, or write Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

Contact:	*Doug Barlund*	*Trish Pannell*
	556-4245	*556-4276*

Workshop "accelerates" soil conservation

Cause to move faster or happen earlier is the dictionary definition of accelerate, and that's the aim of the 1993 Soil Conservation Workshop in January.

Accelerating conservation is the theme of the annual workshop and 15th annual meeting of the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) January 17 through 20 in Edmonton.

Why farmers adopt conservation technology is the subject of the opening keynote address. The speaker is Pete Nowak from the University of Wisconsin. Nowak will discuss why farmers don't adopt conservation technology to help conference participants understand how adopting conservation technology can be sped up.

"Producers who are encouraging their neighbors to get into conservation will also find Professor Nowak's concurrent session on 'neighbor-to-neighbor conservation' full of practical advice on understanding and helping their neighbors," says Peter Gamache, one of the conference organizers.

Nowak is one of over 30 speakers who will be featured at the workshop. The seven other concurrent sessions cover new technologies, soil quality, conservation economics, forage management, farm water quality, shelterbelts and soil salinity.

"We'll also continue and expand a very popular feature of last year's conference. In 1993, more producers—from eight soil and cropping regions—will talk about their particular soil conservation challenges," says Gamache. "And, this year the producers have been teamed with specialists."

Gamache, of Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch, adds a key aspect of the workshop is the opportunity conservationists from across Alberta and neighboring provinces and states have to meet and talk with each other. "The display area will probably be a focal point of many discussions," he notes. Displays feature what's new in conservation with producer groups, agricultural service boards and the industry.

Two other associated events will follow the workshop. A special afternoon workshop on effective communication will run on the afternoon of January 20. Participants can choose between print and electronic media. There's a $20 registration fee for this post-conference workshop.

As well, the Soil and Water Conservation Society (Alberta chapter) will hold its annual meeting and workshop on January 20. This workshop will focus on opportunities and employment in soil and water conservation. For more information, contact Richard Johnson with Alberta Environment in Vegreville at 632-8252.

For more information on the Soil Conservation Workshop and ACTS annual meeting, contact Gamache in Edmonton at 422-4385, or Russ Evans in Indus at 936-5306.

Contact:	*Peter Gamache*	*Russ Evans*
	422-4385	*963-5306*

Balanced hoof discussed at horse conference

A correct hoof angle allows your horse to move better and prevents potential lameness.

An expert speaker at the 1993 Horse Owners and Breeders Conference in Red Deer January 16 and 17 will discuss the balanced hoof in more detail.

Olin Balch, formerly of Washington State University and now of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon, is involved in a major research project on hooves and their relationship to movement and health. "The research looks at the complementary perspectives of veterinary medicine and farrier science," notes Bob Coleman, an Alberta Agriculture horse specialist. "Dr. Balch will tell the simplest and best way to determine if your horse is shod or trimmed at an appropriate angle."

Balch is one of 15 internationally recognized speakers on the conference program. These experts will discuss a variety of topics of interest to horse owners and breeders including reproduction, athletic performance, economics and promotion. The conference offers sessions in specific streams for Thoroughbred, Arabian and Quarter Horse owners and breeders, as well as an all-breeds program.

The Horse Owners and Breeders Conference has a reputation as one of the foremost conferences for horse enthusiasts in North America. The registration rate is $75 per person, or $125 for two people from the same farm.

For registration, or other information, contact Les Burwash in Calgary at 297-6650, or Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906.

Contact: Bob Coleman 427-8906 Les Burwash 297-6650

Four spots in top eight go to Alberta 4-H judges in Regina

Four Alberta 4-Hers claimed spots in the top eight at the recent International 4-H Livestock Judging competition at Regina's Agribition.

Aleah Longshore of Stettler was third, Diane Petersen of Olds was fourth, Lindsey Good of Carstairs was seventh and Tina Young of Strathmore was eighth in the grand aggregate.

Along the way Longshore placed first in both horse and swine classes. Petersen was fourth in the swine class. Good placed in the top five in three classes. He was first in dairy cattle, fourth in light horse and third in oral reasons. Young won the beef class and was fifth in oral reasons.

Two other team members also placed in the top five in the individual judging classes. Megan Reese of Milk River was fourth in the sheep class and fifth in the dairy cattle class. Bernadette McDonald of Stony Plain was third in the light horse judging class.

"Our eight member team posted another strong performance," says Henry Wiegman, provincial 4-H agriculture specialist. He also accompanied the team to Regina. The other team members were Erin Kasbohm of Westlock and Roland Sawatzky of Didsbury. Bill Pollard, a 4-H leader from Spirit River, was other the coach and chaperone.

The Albertans competed against 4-H teams from across Canada as well as Montana. They judged swine, sheep, dairy cattle, beef cattle and horse classes presenting written and oral reasons for their placings.

Alberta team members earned their trips during a recent provincial judging competition held during Farmfair'92 in Edmonton. The team's trip to Regina was sponsored by Uniblok Canada, a division of Superior Feeds, in Rockyford.

Contact: Henry Wiegman 427-2541

Agri-News briefs

Research conference attracts over 200 people

Over 200 people came to Red Deer for the recent 1992 Farming for the Future conference. The conference participants came from a wide range of backgrounds including producers, processors, government and university researchers, extension specialists and the media. They heard presentations from a cross-section of Alberta's leading agricultural scientists. The conference theme of agri-food diversification was also highlighted by a visual banquet of informative displays. The day finished with a speech from Shirley McClellan, associate agriculture minister. In her talk she acknowledged research and development as key components of a competitive agricultural industry. Drawing on her experiences from trade missions to Japan and the former Soviet Union, McClellan stressed the need for effective transfer of new technology to the end-users. She also challenged the agricultural community to intensify its research efforts to add value to raw products and grasp tomorrow's opportunities. For more information on the conference contact Patrick Marce in Edmonton at 427-1956.

Wheat Growers' Convention Jan. 7-8

The Western Canadian Wheat Growers' Association will hold its 1993 convention January 6 through 8 in Saskatoon. The convention theme is "sustaining our future". The keynote speaker and eight sessions will cover specific areas of the future including approaches to sustainability, the impact of reduced inputs, land use complements, innovation in machinery and policies for tomorrow. For more information, contact the Wheat Growers' office in Regina at (306)586-5866.

Coming agricultural events

Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association annual meeting and trade show
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff December 2-5
Nigel Bowles - 489-1991 - Edmonton

Alberta Cattle Commission annual general meeting
Westin Hotel
Calgary December 7-9
Ron Glaser - 275-4400 - Calgary

97th Western Stock Growers Association annual convention, short course and trade fair
Capri Centre
Red Deer December 10-12
Pam Miller - 250-9121 - Calgary

Canadian Wheat Growers Association annual convention
Ramada Renaissance Hotel
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan January 6-8
Alanna Koch - (306)586-5866 - Regina, Saskatchewan

Unifarm annual convention meetings
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton January 11-14
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Unifarm Agri-Trade show
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton January 13-15
Shirley Dyck - 451-5912

Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association annual convention and trade show
Marlborough Inn
Calgary January 15-16
Ron Axelson or Karen Rose - 250-2509 - Calgary, or 1-800-363-8598

Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer January 15-17
Les Burwash - 297-6650 - Calgary

Alberta Canola Producers Commission annual convention
Hilton Hotel
Edmonton January 17-19
Pansy Molen - 452-6487 - Edmonton

1993 Soil Conservation Workshop and ACTS 15th annual meeting
Fanatasyland Hotel
Edmonton January 17-20
Peter Gamache - 422-4385 - Edmonton; Russ Evans - 936-5306 - Indus

1st interprovincial range conference
Saskatoon Inn
Saskatooon, Saskatchewan January 17-20
Conference office - (306)569-2633 - Regina, Saskatchewan

The Certificate of Achievement in crop management by distance education
Lakeland College, Vermilion Campus
Vermilion January 18-April 2
Christina Arvidsson - 853-8528 - Vermilion

Banff Pork Seminar
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff January 19-22
Judy Carss - 492-2343 - Edmonton

1993 Canadian International Farm Equipment show
International Centre
Toronto, Ontario January 19-22
Lesley Nicholson - (519)767-5000 - Peterborough, Ontario

International Poultry Exposition
World Congress Centre
Atlanta, Georgia January 20-22
Southestern Poultry and Egg Association - (404)377-6465 - Decateur, Georgia

Canada West Equipment Dealers Association annual general meeting and convention
Empress Hotel and Victoria Conference Centre
Victoria, British Columbia January 21-23
William Lipsey - 250-7581 - Calgary

"Food, Facts and the Future" Western Regional conference (Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors)
Westin Hotel
Calgary January 22
Bryan Walton - 435-8823 - Edmonton

Lambing management workshop
Lakeland College
Vermilion January 23
Christine Spasoff - 853-8566 - Vermilion

4th biennial Alberta Farm Women's conference
Cedar Park Inn
Edmonton January 29-30
Janet Walter - 347-0600 - Red Deer

68th annual convention and trade show of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association
Halifax, Nova Scotia January 30-February 1
CPMA office - (613)226-4187 - Ottawa, Ontario

Introductory calving workshop
Lakeland College
Vermilion January 30
Christine Spasoff - 853-8566 - Vermilion

Managing Agriculture Conference (MAC'93)
Red Deer Lodge
Red Deer February 1-3
Doug Barlund or Trish Pannell - 556-4240 - Olds

1993 provincial Agricultural Service Board conference
Lethbridge Lodge
Lethbridge February 1-3
Vern Arnold - 867-3606 - Foremost

Alberta Dairy Association 85th convention and annual meeting
Marlborough Inn
Calgary February 1-3
Tom Paterson - 455-5164 - Edmonton

19th annual meeting and convention Feeder Associations of Alberta
Red Deer Lodge
Red Deer February 5-6
Donna - 297-5662 - Calgary

"Food wars! Meeting the Competition": Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry
Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza
Edmonton February 7-8
John Melicher - 451-5959 - Edmonton

Western Barley Growers Association annual convention and trade fair
Red Deer Lodge
Red Deer February 10-12
Kathy Cooper - 291-3630 - Calgary

1993 Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) annual convention
Medicine Hat Lodge
Medicine Hat February 12-14
Wendy Pruden - 427-2174 - Edmonton

46th annual meeting Society for Range Management (SRM)
Albuquerque, New Mexico February 14-19
SRM office - (303)355-7070 - Denver, Colorado

1993 Alberta Soil Science workshop
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton February 22-24
Ray Dowbenko - 493-8737 - Edmonton; Len Kryzanowski - 427-2530/427-6361 - Edmonton

Alberta Agricultural Ambassador School Fair
Cypress Centre, Medicine Hat Exibition and Stampede grounds
Medicine Hat, Febraury 26-27
Betty Gabert - 427-2402 - Edmonton

Calgary Seed Fair and Hay Show
Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary February 28-March 2
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162 - Calgary

93rd annual Calgary Bull Sale
Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Calgary February 28-March 3
Joan EcEvoy - 261-0162

Poultry Industry Conference
Capri Motor Inn
Red Deer March 1-3
Pork, poultry and horse branch - 427-5370 - Edmonton

Beef and dairy cattle AI short course
Lakeland College
Vermilion March 1-11
March 22-April1
Christine Spasoff - 853-8566 - Vermilion

Agriculture Week
Alberta March 7-13
Bard Haddrell - 427-2127 - Edmonton

Canadian Forage Council
International Inn
Winnipeg, Manitoba March 7-10
Marjorie Zingle or Gina Grosenick - 244-4487 - Calgary

Western Canadian Dairy Seminar
Capril Centre
Red Deer March 9-12
Judy Carss - 492-2343 - Edmonton

Beef and dairy cattle AI refresher course
Lakeland College
Vermilion March 15-16
Christine Spasoff - 853-8566 - Vermilion

The National
Spruce Meadows
Calgary June 2 -6
Spruce Meadows - 254-3200 - Calgary

Joint Alberta Women's Institute and Women of Unifarm convention
Olds College
Olds June 8-10
AWI - 469-1254 - Edmonton; Women of Unifarm - 451-4912 - Edmonton

International Workshop on Sustainable Land Management for the 21st Century
University of Lethbridge
Lethbridge June 20-26
Cindy LaValley - 329-2244 - Lethbridge

VII World Conference on Animal Production
Edmonton Convention Centre
Edmonton June 28 - July 2
Department of Animal Science (University of Alberta) - 492-3232 - Edmonton

4th International Livestock Environment Symposium
Warwick Conference Centre
Coventry, England July 6-9
American Society of Agricultural Engineers - (616)429-0300 - St. Joseph, Missouri

The North American
Spruce Meadows
Calgary July 7-11
Spruce Meadows - 254-3200 - Calgary

Calgary Exhibition and Stampede
Stampede Grounds
Calgary July 9-18
Joan McEvoy - 261-0162

39th International Congress of Meat Science and Technology
Calgary August 1-6
Andre Fortin - (613)993-6002 - Ottawa, Ontario

Annual conference Agricultural Institute of Canada "Food: Security and Nutrition"
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland August 18-22
Donna Kelland (709)729-5090 - St. John's, Newfoundland; Dale Sudom - (709)772-6064 - St. John's, Newfoundland

The Masters and Equi-Fair
Spruce Meadows
Calgary September 8-12
Spruce Meadows - 254-3200 - Calgary

Agri-Trade International Farm Equipment and Services exposition
Westerner Park
Red Deer November 10-13
Pat Kennedy - 347-4491 - Red Deer

Note: Alberta communities host a number of local fairs. Because there are so many, they are not listed in the "Coming Agricultural Events" list. A list of agricultural society fairs was compiled by the community and rural services branch and is available by writing the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Please quote Agdex 007.

Coming agricultural events

Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in 1993? Are there any events omitted in the attached list?

1. Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by February 25, 1993 to:

Agri-News Editor
Print Media Branch
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

*(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News.
The next edition will be printed March 2, 1993)*

Phone: (40

AGRI-NEWS

December 14, 1992

Dec.23 early bird registration deadline for Creating Tomorrow

Creating Tomorrow conference participants can save $10 on their registration costs if they register by December 23.

The Creating Tomorrow conference January 6 through 8 in Red Deer is the final step in consulting Albertans about their vision for Alberta's agriculture and food industry. The process started earlier this year with the release of a draft paper. Through the late summer and fall a series of town hall meetings were held across the province asking Albertans for their opinions and ideas.

At the January conference the vision and goals from the town hall meetings will be turned into strategies and action plans. The results will be used for developing guidelines on future agriculture and food policies and programs, and incorporated in Towards 2000 Together, the provincial government's economic development strategy.

Alberta's agriculture ministers Ernie Isley and Shirley McClellan issued an invitation to all Albertans to take part in the conference. And conference organizers are hoping to have Albertans from a wide range of occupations and backgrounds at the January conference.

"The agriculture and food industry has more stakeholders than farmers, agribusinesses, food processors, distributers, retailers and rural communities. Other business people, urban consumers, academics and researchers all have a stake, too. The first 14 public meetings had that kind of diversity and we hope it continues," says Ben McEwen, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister.

Everyone who participated at one of the earlier meetings will receive a conference registration brochure in the mail. Registration is $45 per person before December 23, and $55 after December 23.

Registration information is available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. As well, people interested in registering for the conference can contact the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at 451-5959, or FAX 452-5385.

Contact:	*Evelyn Shapka*	*Barb Stroh*
	427-2417	*427-2417*

January'93 first annual pulse month

Alberta's pulse growers hope to put a new "pulse" in the lives of Albertans during the first annual Pulse Month in January 1993.

"Basically, it's an awareness month," says Renald Lamoureux, a Fort Saskatchewan area farmer who is also president of the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission. "We hope to put a spotlight on pulses, their nutritional value and how they can fit into our diet."

Pulses—dried peas, beans and lentils—are one of the oldest foods cultivated by man. They provide protein, iron, calcium, B vitamins and fibre. They also contain little fat or sodium and no cholesterol.

Alberta farmers are growing more acres of pulses and other specialty crops as markets open up and price returns increase compared to more traditional cereal crops. Alberta farmers seeded 8,500 acres of dry beans, 7,500 acres of dry peas and 6,000 acres of lentils in 1981. By 1991 the acreage had increased considerably. Respectively the total acres were 28,400 of dry

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

beans, 167,100 of dry peas and 12,200 of lentils.

The first Alberta Pulse Month has grown from a Farming for Future research project conducted by two Alberta Agriculture district home economists in southern Alberta. Brenda Lea MacPhail and Anne Luehr examined changing consumers' perceptions about pulses. They presented their results at the recent annual meeting of the pulse growers commission.

All Alberta district home economists will be involved in promoting the awareness month. Each will be sent a number of resources including recipe cards for baked beans and sweet bean tarts and brochures.

"The promotional package also includes a pulse course outline, something a district home economist can use to teach people about pulses and cooking them," says MacPhail. "The awareness month is about dispelling some of the myths about pulses, that they are hard to cook and always cause gas. With the quick soak method, pulses are very easy to cook and can be used from appetizers to desserts.

"There are two ways of preventing gas," she adds. "Discard the soaking water before you cook, and introduce pulses to your diet slowly."

Tent cards will be at as many restaurants as possible during the month she adds. The cards will talk about the variety of pulses available in Alberta, their nutritional content and the growing Alberta industry.

The commission has also sought support for Pulse Month from a variety of sources including the Alberta Registered Dieticians Association, the Alberta Food Processors Association, the Alberta Food and Beverage Association and hotel and restaurant associations.

For more information about Pulse Month, contact Lamoureux in Fort Saskatchewan at 998-5273, MacPhail in Medicine Hat at 527-9750, Craig Shaw in Lacombe at 782-6618, the Alberta Pulse Growers Commission office in Lethbridge at 327-0626, or your local Alberta Agriculture district home economist.

Contact: *Renald Lamoureux* *Brenda Lea MacPhail*
998-5273 *527-9750*
Craig Shaw
782-6618

Exchange rate boosts livestock prices

A lower Canadian dollar was a bonus to Alberta livestock producers in November, but a volatile exchange rate makes price forecasting more difficult says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Canadian feedlot operators got an early Christmas present this year as a steady drop in the Canada/U.S. exchange rate padded already positive feeding margins," says Ron Gietz.

The two and a half cent drop in the value of the Canadian dollar during the first three weeks of November resulted in increases in Alberta fed cattle prices to the mid to upper $80/cwt. range. "Those were the highest levels of the year to that date," he says.

"Even slaughter cow prices rebounded slightly from their typical November slump as a result of the more favorable exchange rate," he adds.

Gietz has revised his slaughter cattle price projections for December and early into 1993 based on a 78 cent Canadian dollar. He forecasts the average Alberta Direct Sale Steer price at $86/cwt. through December and $85/cwt. for January and February of 1993.

"If the current downtrend in the Canada/U.S. exchange rate continues, today's forecasts will be on the low side. If the dollar is able to rally, these forecasts will seem optimistic. In the current volatile exchange rate market, anything is possible," he says.

Heavy feeder cattle prices in Alberta have been in a gradual but steady upwards trend since May. Gietz says recent price increases from the lower dollar should allow this trend to continue until late in the year.

"From January onwards the heavy feeder cattle market will be susceptible to a reversal in the prevailing price trend. The market for heavy feeders will take its cue from developments in the fed cattle markets in the new year. If fed cattle prices hold firm or increase, heavy feeders should be able to do the same. But any weakness in winter fed cattle markets could quickly spill over into the feeder trade," he says.

As with other Canadian livestock markets, slaughter hog markets saw firm to higher prices with the slumping Canadian dollar. "At the same time as the dollar dropped, U.S. prices continued to hold above the $40/cwt. (U.S.$ live weight) level, providing underlying support to Canadian markets," Gietz notes.

"As I said already, price forecasts are quickly dated in the current environment of rapidly changing exchange rates," he says. "However, again based on a 78 cent Canadian dollar, I see an average producer payment price for Index 100 hogs in Alberta at $1.25/kg during December, falling slightly to $1.20 in January and rising again to $1.25 in February."

Contact: *Ron Gietz*
427-5376

Carry over of feed wheat expected

A surplus of feed wheat could keep local feed prices low says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Roughly 11 to 12 million tonnes or about 50 per cent of the 1992 Canadian wheat crop will grade feed. "Based on history, the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) may be able to export about four million tonnes," says Larry Ruud. "The domestic market should consume a million or more tonnes than last year, about 4.2 to 4.7 million tonnes. That leaves a carry over of three to four million tonnes. Depending on quota, this will weigh heavily on local feed

Cont'd on page 3

prices through the coming year."

He forecasts the futures market for feed wheat won't move much from the current $90 per tonne level. Local prices for feed wheat should range between $75 and $80 per tonne. "Prices at best will remain flat, and more likely fall over the course of the crop year," he says.

Ruud also notes the CWB faces a very competitive world market when selling feed wheat. "There's a large U.S. corn crop and more than normal feed wheat supplies elsewhere in the world."

For higher grades of wheat, international prices have moved back to levels similar to the middle of the 1991-92 crop year. At these levels, CWB payments on the higher grades will closely match last year's Ruud says. "Through the rest of the 1992-93 crop year, international prices will continue to be largely subsidy and credit driven.

"The details of a possible GATT deal will be important in determining how the market reacts to the long term production/consumption implications of a change to the international trading rules," he adds.

Contact: *Larry Ruud*
427-5386

Lamb outlook improves

The outlook for lamb markets improved significantly in November says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"The tightening of slaughter lamb supplies has finally been recognized in U.S. markets and as a result wholesale carcass prices have increased," says Jo Ann Sandhu. "The increase in U.S. slaughter lamb prices of more than $(U.S.)8/ cwt. can be expected to boost Canadian slaughter lamb prices at least $10/cwt."

Another factor in the price increase is the lower value Canadian dollar. "Canadian slaughter lamb prices could have been expected to rise about $2.30/cwt. on the nearly three cent drop in the Canadian dollar during November," she says.

During November bids for railgrade slaughter lamb carcasses increased at the Innisfail plant from $1.31 to $1.38/lb. by the end of the month. Slaughter bookings remained current she adds.

Sandhu projects slaughter lamb prices—based on an approximate 78 cent Canadian dollar—in the $70 to $74/cwt. range through December and moving higher in the new year. Her forecast for January is prices in the range of $72 to $76/cwt., $78 to $82/cwt. through February and even higher into the spring.

"One thing lamb producers should keep in mind is that a major recovery in the value of the Canadian dollar can take as much as $10/cwt. out of the projections," she cautions.

Contact: *Jo Ann Sandhu*
427-5387

DHEs launch 50th anniversary logo

With the launch of a 50th anniversary logo, the celebration of a half century of Alberta Agriculture district home economists is underway.

While home economics was a well established part of the provincial Department of Agriculture from its earliest years, the first district home economist wasn't appointed until May, 1943.

Today there are 56 district home economist positions across the province. "The service provided by home economics extension to rural Albertans has evolved to meet the changing needs of rural and farm families," say Shirley Myers, current head of the home economics branch. She started as district home economist in Grande Prairie in 1960.

While some of a district home economist's job description has changed through the years, there are still common concerns she adds. "Promoting good nutrition and the consumption of Alberta grown and processed foods, family resource management and 4-H have been part of the job for many, many years."

A number of activities have been planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary. This includes a major "reunion" event in Stettler on May 21 and 22.

As well, a commemorative "history" book is planned. "The impact the district home economist service has had on the development of agriculture and rural communities is its focus," says Myers.

Personal stories from past and present rural clients and Alberta Agriculture staff are being collected. Anyone who wants to contribute a story can send them to: Edith Zawadiuk, Box 487, Two Hills, Alberta, T0B 4K0. The deadline for submissions is December 31, 1992.

DISTRICT HOME ECONOMISTS
50 YEARS
SERVING RURAL ALBERTA 1943-1993

Contact: *Shirley Myers* *Bertha Eggertson*
427-2412 *427-2412*

Workshop starter to commercial greenhouse business

A "full house" for an October workshop on the business and financial aspects of becoming a greenhouse grower has prompted a second workshop for prospective growers.

Cont'd on page 4

The next day long workshop is scheduled for Friday January 29 at Olds College. "We had a lot of interest in the first workshop in Brooks, so this workshop will focus on the same topics," says Judy Butt, a greenhouse specialist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

Butt emphasizes the workshop is on the business side of being a greenhouse grower. "In particular the workshop looks at getting started in the commercial greenhouse business. We won't be talking about production tips," she says.

Two greenhouse growers—a tomato and a bedding plant grower—will share their start-up experiences with the workshop participants. As well, an Alberta Agriculture engineer will discuss heating, ventilation and cooling systems.

The other major topics at the workshop are: the greenhouse industry in Alberta, structures and equipment, costs of construction, crop possibilities and determining the cost of production.

"We need a minimum of 20 people for the workshop, and there's a waiting list about that long, so anyone who is interested should register as soon as possible," says Butt.

Participants are registered when payment is received. The workshop cost is $10.70 (including GST). Make cheques payable to the Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association, the workshop sponsor, and send them to the attention of Mayumi Bunney at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center, S.S. 4, Brooks, Alberta, T1R 1E6.

Contact: Judy Butt
362-3391

Agri-News briefs

Feed grain prices not likely moving

Even though corn prices will likely move higher over the winter, heavy feed supplies in Alberta will keep a lid on any upward shift in our feed prices says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Western barley has probably seen its peak at $108 per tonne and could back off to the $90 to $95 per tonne range once we have moved through the traditionally strong Christmas and early January market," says Larry Ruud. Local Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) initial payments for barley and feed wheat won't move much, if at all, from current levels he adds. However, local cash prices in central Alberta should still provide a $10 to $15 premium to the CWB, coming in at $75 to $80 per tonne. Prices in southern Alberta will probably fall off to $85 to $90 per tonne. Northern Alberta will likely see prices in the cash market not much higher than the CWB's. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Europe, Japan, crop quality all factors in canola market

Resolving the U.S.-EC dispute over farm subsidies will provide a psychological boost to the market says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst, but there are still a lot of other factors influencing the canola market. The U.S. has been aggressively pursuing exports and European crushers have stepped up their purchases of U.S. soybeans. The quality of this year's Canadian canola crop is still in doubt. "Once that is known the markets will find the extent we can maintain a premium to European canola," says Larry Ruud. "Shipments of European canola into central Canada and or Japan would be a signal that the premium has moved beyond a tolerable level." Ruud says Japan will likely be forced to import more European canola late in the crop year to maintain its crush level. Another challenge is developing an export market for number three and sample canola. "Possible markets are Europe for industrial use and to blend with their higher quality canola this year, Asia and South America. As these and other export markets develop, discounts for these lower grades should narrow," he says. For more information, contact Ruud in Edmonton at 427-5386.

Calf prices strengthened in November

While feeder calf prices bottomed out in the late-October early-November period, prices actually strengthened in Alberta during November says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Prices strengthened as numbers began to dwindle and the fed cattle outlook improved," says Ron Gietz. Overall with the large volume of early marketings, there was a relatively small seasonal price decline in this year's calf run he notes. Before October, calf prices were typically similar to slightly below 1991 price levels. "But prices for the bulk of the fall run from October onwards have been well above 1991 levels," he says. "Depending on when they typically buy and sell cattle, producers may have varying perceptions as to whether 1992 was a better or worse year than 1991," he adds. For more information, contact Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

Smaller honey crop this year

Preliminary estimates indicated a smaller crop both nationally and in Alberta this year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst. "Regionally production was down from last year in all provinces

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except British Columbia and Saskatchewan," says Al Dooley. In Alberta, the drop in production compared to 1991 was modest, but is 1,000 tonnes below the 1986-90 average of 10,200 tonnes. Honey prices appear to be holding steady at near the 58 cent per pound level he adds. "Prospects for the South American harvest will be the next major piece of information directing markets," he says. For more information, contact Dooley in Edmonton at 427-4387.

Post-conservation workshop focuses on communicating

"Be comfortable communicating" is the title of a special afternoon workshop to be held in conjunction with the 1993 Soil Conservation Workshop in Edmonton. The communication workshop will be held the afternoon of January 20. Two options are offered: print and electronic media. John Bohonos, a broadcaster for over 30 years, will instruct the radio and television session. He will discuss how to attract media attention, what the media looks for, giving good interviews, putting a positive spin on a negative story and the importance of cultivating a relationship with the media. The print media session will have a hands-on aspect for participants to improve their skills. Alberta Agriculture communication specialists Tracey Munro and Cathy Wolters will instruct this session. Registration for the communication workshop is $20 per person. For registration or other information, contact Peter Gamache in Edmonton at 422-4385, or Russ Evans in Indus at 936-5306.

Seed cleaning association meets Jan. 14-16

The Association of Alberta Co-op Seed Cleaning Plants is holding its 40th anniversary convention January 14 through 16 in Edmonton. The convention theme is 40 years of progress. The convention starts with a joint opening for delegates, managers and visitors. Friday features separate meetings for delegates and members of the manager's association. Among the topics on the agenda are insurance, a plant industry report, workers' compensation rates, safety in the work place and an update on Olds College's grain and seed technology course. For more information, contact Gus Lindstrom in Bashaw at 372-3580.

Banff Pork Seminar Jan. 20-22

The 1993 Banff Pork Seminar will run January 20 through 22 at the Banff Springs Hotel. The conference starts on January 19 with a reception and buffet. The first day of the conference will be devoted to nutrition. The second day will focus on marketing and the final day on meat quality and its place in marketing. For registration and other information, contact Judy Carss at 492-3232.

Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

December 21, 1992

EDITOR'S NOTE: Season's greetings. This issue is the final Agri-News issue for 1992. Your next mailing will be the January 4, 1993 issue.

Strategies sought at Creating Tomorrow conference

When Albertans meet in Red Deer January 6 through 8 they'll be seeking strategies to build a strong provincial agriculture and food industry.

"At the Creating Tomorrow conference participants will come together to develop strategies to make a vision and goals for the industry a reality," says Shirley Myers, chair of the conference planning committee. Myers is also head of Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch.

The Creating Tomorrow conference is a second phase in consulting industry stakeholders and Albertans in general about the direction of the agriculture and food industry.

Through the late summer and fall a series of public meetings were held across the province asking Albertans for their opinions and ideas. At the conference, those ideas will be turned into action plans for the industry and government.

Everyone who participated at one of the earlier meetings was mailed a registration brochure for the Red Deer conference. As well, invitations were sent to a variety of agribusinesses, food processors, academics, researchers and other industry stakeholders. A general invitation to the public was also issued by the province's agriculture ministers in late November.

"We're hoping for diverse participation at this conference," says Myers. "From farmers to rural community members, consumers to politicians, and food processors to retailers and distributors."

Myers says conference participants will discuss how to reach goals such as improving competitiveness in domestic and international markets, sustaining the natural resource base and the environment, and enhancing the strengths of the industry's people, families and communities.

Alberta's new Premier is tentatively scheduled to address the conference during the Thursday evening banquet. The agriculture minister will also take part in the conference.

Registration information is available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices and from the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) in Edmonton at 451-5959 or FAX 452-5385. People who register for the conference will receive a summary of the consultation meeting results and other conference information.

Contact: Shirley Myers
427-2412
Barb Stroh
427-2417
Evelyn Shapka
427-2417

"Rainbow" food guide to healthy eating in the '90s

Along with suggested daily servings from the four food groups, Canada's new Food Guide also offers Canadians good advice on how to eat well says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Canada's new Food Guide has been born in a time when Canadians are more interested than ever in nutrition, health and eating sensibly," says Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and

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This Week

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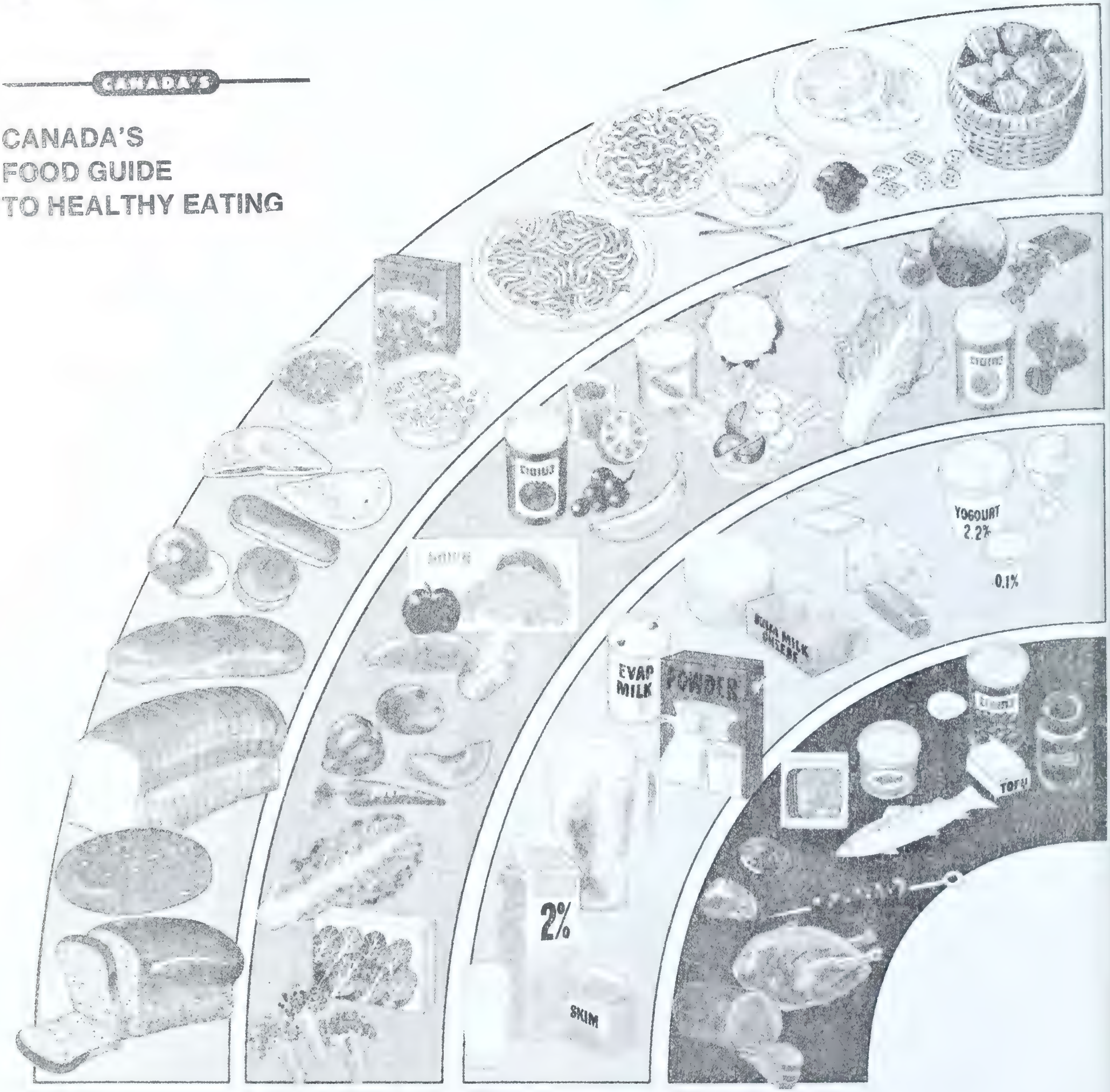
Agri-News is published weekly. Reprinting of articles is encouraged. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. A typewritten edition with wider line-spacing is available to media editors upon request. Editor – Cathy Wolters

Alberta
AGRICULTURE

Healthy Canada

CANADA'S

CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING


YOGOURT 2.2%
0.1%
SKIM MILK CHEESE
EVAP MILK
POWDER
TOFU
2%
SKIM

Grain Products
Choose whole grain and enriched products more often.

Vegetables & Fruit
Choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.

Milk Products
Choose lower-fat milk products more often.

Meat & Alternatives
Choose leaner meats, poultry and fish, as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.

nutrition specialist. "The guide certainly reflects this in both recommended daily servings and in its expanded title as Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

"As with the guidelines for healthy eating released in 1990, the first emphasis is put on eating a variety of foods," she adds. The guide encourages people to "enjoy a variety of foods from each group every day".

Each food group—grain products, vegetables and fruits, milk products and meat and alternatives—is essential. All of them provide their own set of nutrients important in healthy body function and maintenance.

The guidelines also promote choosing lower-fat foods more often. "Each of the four food groups includes foods that contain fat. But you do have a choice," says Whitmore. Those choices include: lower-fat dairy products; lean meat; using less butter or margarine; less or lower-fat dressing on salads; vegetables without butter, margarine or rich sauces; baking, broiling or microwaving meat, fish and poultry; having fried and deep-fried foods less often; and, less snacks such as chips and chocolate bars.

For people familiar with the former food guide wheel, the updated guide also has a new look. The four food groups are arranged in a rainbow. It also includes "directional statements" about how to choose foods and foods within the food groups.

The new Food Guide emphasizes grain products and recommends whole grain and enriched products more often. People require from five to 12 servings of grain products daily.

Between five and 10 servings of fruits and vegetables are suggested in the new guide. Within that group, it's recommended to choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.

"Age plays a big role in how many servings of milk products you require in a day," notes Whitmore. Children between age four and nine require two to three servings daily. Youths between 10 and 16 need slightly more, three to four servings each daily. The same range applies to pregnant and breast-feeding women. The adult range is two to four servings daily.

Milk products is one area where people can cut down their fat intake. "Lower-fat products still have the high quality protein and calcium you need. When buying milk, yogurt, cheese and milk powder, choose products with the lower percentage milk fat (% M.F) or butter fat (% B.F.)," Whitmore advises.

Two to three servings of meat and alternatives are required each day. The guide also advises to choose leaner meats, poultry and fish, as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often. "This will reduce how much fat you eat," she notes. "As well, you can make a difference when you prepare meats by trimming visible fat, draining off extra fat and choose methods other than frying to cook."

Whitmore adds the food guide ranges are because different people need different amounts of food. The amount depends on age, body type, level of activity and gender. The guide is intended for people over the age of four years. Most people will need to have more than the lower number of servings, especially pregnant and breast-feeding women, male teenagers and highly active people.

The 1992 food guide also mentions "other foods" for the first time. It notes: "Taste and enjoyment can also come from other foods and beverages that are not part of the four food groups. Some of these foods are higher in fat or calories, so use these foods in moderation".

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

Take care of your bones

Some people consider osteoporosis an "old woman's" disease, but it can strike all ages of either gender says an Alberta Agriculture foods and nutrition specialist.

"While osteoporosis occurs more often among post-menopausal women and has been linked to decreased estrogen, that's just one factor for who can be at risk," says Linda St. Onge. "No single factor leading to osteoporosis has been identified."

Literally meaning "porous bones" and often called the brittle bone disease, osteoporosis causes bones to become lighter, more fragile and lacy inside like a honeycomb.

Eating habits, in particular calcium intake, are another link to the disease. Osteoporosis usually isn't seen in people with consistently high calcium intake.

Exercise, heritage and body types are three of the other major factors in the disease. "There is evidence that exercise stimulates new bone growth and idleness will actually contribute to bone breakdown," she says. "The exercise doesn't have to be complicated, even walking is enough."

Caucasians tend to develop osteoporosis more than blacks. Heredity also plays in a role. If there is osteoporosis in your family, your risk is increased.

St. Onge also notes women who are slightly overweight seem to be more protected than those who are lean and slight. Petite women are more susceptible than taller women.

While there isn't a current treatment to restore lost bone, prevention is the best strategy. "Build solid bones with a high density of calcium when you are young—before you're 35. Use good nutrition with adequate calcium and exercise," she says.

Adults need about 800 mg of calcium daily. Calcium needs peak during the teen years at about 1100 mg per day. School age children need 600 to 900 mg daily. Babies, three and under, need about 500 mg daily. One cup of milk or yogurt, or one and one half ounces of cheese provide about 320 mg of calcium.

"Broccoli and some other green vegetables also contribute calcium, although you'd need to eat three cups to get the same amount as in a cup of milk," says St. Onge. As well, this calcium isn't as easily absorbed as the calcium in milk products.

For people who don't like to drink milk, try other milk products such as yogurt. As well, milk or yogurt can be added to breakfast

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cereals and used in cooking soups and puddings.

"A number of lifestyle factors can increase the calcium loss in your body, so take care," she warns. These include cigarette smoking, excessive intake of aluminum type antacids, excessive caffeine intake, high protein intake, excessive fibre intake, high alcohol intake and excessive amounts of vitamin D.

"It's also best to get your nutrients from the grocery store, not a drugstore," she adds. "While advertising may suggest supplements are an easy way to calcium, their calcium content is generally low and they don't provide other essential nutrients."

Contact: Linda St. Onge
427-2412

Two new titles hit district video library shelves

Alberta Agriculture's district video libraries have two new titles that should garner a lot of attention from farmers.

"Winter Wheat" and "Field Scouting" were both produced this year by the department's broadcast media branch. Both also approach their topics in straight-ahead no-nonsense manners.

"Winter wheat was one of the first crops grown here on the Prairies and is now the most common wheat in the world", says Ken Blackley, broadcast media information officer. "The new tape looks at the process and economics involved in growing the crop. And, it contains segments with both farmers and processors as well as researchers. That gives it a very well-rounded feel."

The second title, "Field Scouting", details a practice that can help control pests. "It clearly explains the advantages of scouting for pests as well as the hows and whys", says Blackley. "It's very hands-on and features Alberta Agriculture's Mike Dolinsky and Dr. Ieuan Evans as well as experts from Agriculture Canada.

"It was developed to supplement the Farmer Pesticide Certificate Programs," he adds, "But it should be a must-see for anyone with field crops."

Both "Winter Wheat" and "Field Scouting" may be borrowed from any Alberta Agriculture district office or by writing the Broadcast Media Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Ken Blackley
427-2127

Flowering plants for festive gifts

If last minute Christmas gifts and the puzzle of something for a person who has everything are a problem this year, try a unique, colorful and lasting gift.

"A flowering plant could be the solution," says Pam North, horticulturist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. "There is a wide variety of plants that can brighten both Christmas and winter."

Most people think of the traditional poinsettia. Red is the most common color, but pink, creamy white and bicolor poinsettias are available. For something different, try yellow. The "mumsettia", a pot of white chrysanthemums surrounding a single red poinsettia, is also colorful and different.

The colorful part of poinsettias are the bracts, or modified leaves. With proper care they can last between two and three months. When buying a poinsettia check for the true flowers, the green and yellow structures in the centre of the colorful bracts. "If the true flowers are still on the plant it will last longer," she says.

But poinsettias, while plentiful during the holiday season aren't a plant shopper's only choice. Other common flowering plants include Christmas cactus, azaleas, cyclamen and kalanchoe. Christmas cactus has flower shades of red, pink and orange. Red, pink and white flowering azaleas are popular at Christmas. Cyclamen's unusual and delicate flowers include shades of pink, red, purple and white. Kalanchoe makes a nice small gift plant says North. It comes in bright red, pink, orange and yellow.

Another Christmas gift plant is the amaryllis. Amaryllis is grown from a bulb and is sold individually or in gift boxes containing a bulb, pot and soil. "It's the perfect gift plant because it's easy to grow and very showy," says North. Planting to flowering takes approximately six weeks.

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

Caring tips for your festive season plants

Overwatering is the most common problem associated with plants in the winter says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"It's a problem because plants use less water then. But, too much water isn't the only way things can go wrong," says Shelley Barkley, information officer at the Alberta Agriculture Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks. "Besides overwatering, light, temperatures and drafts often are linked to plant problems,"

Watering, however, is often a critical part of care she notes. "Most traditional gift and festive plants such as poinsettias should be watered when the top of the soil is dry to the touch. Water the plant thoroughly and allow the excess to drain," she says.

When plants are overwatered and don't have good drainage, the roots suffocate. Bottom leaves will turn yellow and fall off. "The combination of water and drainage are important," she adds.

Azaleas are one exception to the "dry to the touch" watering rule. Soil should be kept moist all the time and not allowed to dry out. As well, chrysanthemums shouldn't be allowed to dry out to where they're wilting.

"Beyond watering there are several basic care guides to follow that will help you to keep flowering plants long past the holiday season," she says.

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One is related to watering. She recommends removing colored foil around plant pots, or punch holes in the bottom, so water can drain. Second, put the plants in bright light, but out of direct sun. Hot, sunny locations will usually reduce flower life. Nor, do flowers last long in a dark location.

Normal room temperatures are usually suitable, but flowering plants last longer in cool temperatures, between 16 and 22°C. Cyclamen, in particular, need cool conditions to thrive.

As well, plants should be kept out of drafty locations by a door or over a heat register. Drafts will also reduce the length of time a plant is attractive.

Barkley says plants will give clues to what may be causing them to change from lush to yellowing and or wilted.

If the buds on a holiday or Christmas cactus wilt, raise the humidity and water it more often. If it's dropping buds, lack or excess water, exposure to cold drafts, excessive handling, overfertilization or a changing environment can be to blame.

Azaleas with yellow leaves may mean the soil is becoming alkaline. Barkley suggests dusting the soil surface with powdered sulphur once a month or adding vinegar to the water (4 ml vinegar in 1l of water). Another alternative is watering the plant with snow melt, rain or distilled water.

"Poinsettias will give many different signs of any problems," she says. "For instance, if the poinsettia drops leaves, suspect a low light level and move it to a brighter spot."

Droopy leaves and bracts may mean the plant has been sleeved (wrapped in paper) too long. The droop should only last 24 to 48 hours if the condition is remedied. Yellowing leaves and sudden leaf drop could mean sudden temperature fluctuations, or too dry soil. Bluish or white bracts could indicate an irreversible chilling injury.

Rotting flowers and leaves with a fine, downy mold on chrysanthemum leaves means gray mould. A fungicide spray, benomyl or folpet, should take care of the problem.

To prevent problems when giving or receiving a plant, Barkley advises taking care of the plant during transportation. Wrap the plant well for transportation. Make sure vehicles are warm before taking the plant outside. Don't set the plant right in front of the vehicle's heat vent. Unwrap the plant as soon as possible when it's taken indoors.

Contact: *Shelley Barkley*
362-3391

"Horseman's sculptor" at Alberta horse conference

Some have called him America's greatest equine sculptor, but Jim Reno is more.

The artist, horseman, historian and story teller will the featured banquet speaker at the 1993 Horse Owners and Breeders Conference in Red Deer January 16 and 17.

Reno, of Kerrville, Texas, will show the historian and story teller in his presentation of "Comanches—Lord of the Plains". Warriors from the tribe found in the American southwest are featured in a number of Reno pieces.

He will also discuss famous horses in sculpture in conference sessions. Reno himself is well known for his monument of Triple Crown winner Secretariat.

"We're very pleased to have Jim Reno at our conference," says Les Burwash of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch. "He is well known for his sculpture, but also as a horse trainer and his involvement with both Quarter and cutting horses."

Reno's work has been exhibited from Texas to New York to London. Among the diverse locations of Reno collections are the White House, the National Museum of Racing, Texas A&M University and by King Olav V of Norway.

Reno is one of 15 internationally recognized speakers on the conference program. These experts will discuss a variety of topics of interest to horse owners and breeders including reproduction, athletic performance, economics and promotion. The conference offers sessions in specific streams for Thoroughbred, Arabian and Quarter Horse owners and breeders, as well as an all-breeds program.

The Horse Owners and Breeders Conference is one of the foremost conferences for horse enthusiasts in North America. The registration rate is $75 per person, or $125 for two people from the same farm.

For registration, or other information, contact Burwash in Calgary at 297-6650, or Bob Coleman in Edmonton at 427-8906.

Contact: *Les Burwash* *Bob Coleman*
297-6650 *427-8906*

Four international speakers featured at Banff Pork Seminar

Four international speakers will bring their leading edge pork industry technology and thinking to the Banff Pork Seminar January 20 through 22.

"The Banff seminars are internationally known and attract international speakers," says Alan George, a member of the organizing committee and an Alberta Agriculture regional swine specialist.

"The seminars also attract the cream of the industry—producers through researchers—not just from Alberta, but also nationally," he adds. "Last year, for example, there were participants from Vancouver to Prince Edward Island."

Among the four international speakers are two Americans, a British speaker and an Australian. Roger Campbell is general manager of technical services for Bunge Meat Industries in Australia. He's responsible for nutrition, genetics, animal health, meat quality and research and development for the company that owns 40,000 sows.

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Campbell will make two presentations during the first day of the conference. That day is dedicated to the subject of feeding strategies. Campbell will discuss feeding growing-finishing pigs and modelling the overall production program.

Also from abroad comes Chris Warkup, of the British Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC). Warkup is responsible for the design, management and interpretation of many of MLC's meat quality research projects. He will be speaking twice during the conference. Once on organization of pig breed improvement and pig production in the European Community, and his second presentation is about improving meat quality.

Robert Goodband, an extension swine specialist at the Kansas State University, and Roger Easter, an animal science professor at the University of Illinois, are the two other international speakers. Goodband will discuss feeding the weaned pig and "vision 2000", business and economic factors necessary for a successful swine enterprise. Easter's topics are the effect of protein nutrition in limiting swine growth and a future view of U.S. and South American swine production.

The conference theme is strategies for success and survival and each day is devoted to a particular strategy area. Day one's overall theme is feeding strategies. Day two is split into marketing strategies and production strategies. The final day wraps up with strategies to improve and reward meat quality.

"A number of respected researchers and professors from Western Canada will also share their expertise during the seminar," notes George. As well, George and other Alberta Agriculture regional swine specialists along with producers from four regions will outline and discuss production systems. Differences in production costs and practices will be highlighted.

For registration and other information about the conference, contact Judy Carss at the University of Alberta at 492-3232. Information brochures are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices and from the regional swine specialists.

Contact: Alan George
381-5107

Conference devotes day to planning and leadership skills

Planning and leadership skills are vital to managing change, and farm couples can learn more about those skills at the 1993 Managing Agriculture Conference (MAC).

"The entire second day of MAC'93, February 2, will be devoted to speakers discussing how to develop and build planning and leadership skills," says Doug Barlund, project leader for MAC'93. The conference runs February 1 through 3 in Red Deer.

"A time for change is the conference theme and day two's speakers will talk about making change happen," says Barlund. "For example, one of the speaker's topic is 'good things don't just happen—they're planned'."

One of the day's features is a panel of "risk takers". All are business people who teamed new ideas with entrepreneurial spirit and realized their dreams plus made a profit.

In another session, participants will be encouraged to use their imagination to think creatively to solve problems and improve products and services.

Motivational speaker Alan Simmons will have two different sessions. In the first he'll offer advice on how to add leadership qualities to your life in these changing times. In the second titled, "Hey YOU! Listen Up!", he'll show participants how to communicate better.

Personnel management and holistic farming are also topics on the day's agenda.

MAC'93 is the 16th annual management conference offered by Alberta Agriculture for farm families. Farm couples are encouraged to attend the conference together. "Our registration rates reflect our hope the farm team comes to the conference. Registration for a couple—and that includes all the meals—is $275. A single registration is $175," notes Barlund.

A new registration feature for 1993 is single day registration he adds. The cost is $75 per person.

The first day of the conference focuses on family business ownership issues and the final day on business operations, particularly marketing.

Conference brochures and registration forms are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices and from Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) loan officers. Or, for more information, contact Barlund or Trish Pannell at the farm business management branch in Olds, at 556-4276, or write, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

Contact: Doug Barlund 556-4245
Trish Pannell 556-4276

Neighbors, stray animals and line fences

by Clifford W. Downey
Farmers' Advocate of Alberta

The miseries neighbors inflict on neighbors, as witnessed by the cases coming to my office, are many and varied. Sometimes it's indifference, occasionally malice, often just carelessness, but the results are almost always the same—the loss of friendship and neighborliness.

In Alberta, these matters are basically covered by the Stray Animal Act and the Line Fence Act.

With the Stray Animals Act, the important thing to remember is that if your livestock is out and running at large, you are responsible. That the neighbor doesn't fix his share of the fence or that gates were left open by parties unknown have no bearing—the buck still stops with you.

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Now about fences. First, let me put to rest two often held views of the law relating to fences that have no basis in current law. One of the "myths" is that cultivation can't take place within a specified distance, generally held as eight feet, from a fence shared with a neighbor. This is thought to prevent livestock being enticed by a green crop just across the fence from a grazed pasture.

The other misconception is that when there are questions or disagreements about ownership or maintenance of a fence, and when all else fails, there is a formula to determine which half of a line fence is your responsibility. Namely, you walk on to your property from the road allowance, face the fence in question, and your share of the fence was the right-hand side.

Neither of those principles is supported by legislation. Generally, with fences that have been around for many years, ownership isn't a question and maintenance is shared by common agreement.

If you do have a dispute about location, ownership or maintenance, provisions for settlement are in the Line Fence Act. The act specifies an arbitrator or arbitrators should be named and they would provide a judgement. The arbitrator can use a licensed Alberta land surveyor to establish an accurate boundary line.

There are a couple of other typical fence questions we get at the Farmers' Advocate's office. One is: "Do I need to share the cost of a fence or its maintenance if I don't have livestock?". The answer is no, you don't. But if later you do have livestock in that field, then you will be obligated to share in the cost of the fence and share in its maintenance as long as you have livestock.

Another common question is what to do if you believe an old fence was misaligned when it was originally built and your neighbor is farming some of your land. If this type of problem bothers you to the extent you want to do something about it and you can't come to an agreement with your neighbor, the best thing to do is hire a licensed land surveyor. The surveyor can mark out the proper fence alignment.

You should also consider that if you want a new fence constructed on the surveyed boundary, you may have to pay for it yourself. You were the person who asked for the correction. Probably the old fence had been in position since the country was homesteaded and it wasn't the neighbor who was unhappy with its location.

It's worth considering that you may be better off to forget what your legal rights are and do a little extra fencing, even if it extends to your neighbor's portion of the fence. Remaining on friendly terms with your neighbors can often add greatly to your quality of life in the years ahead. It's good to remember the old adage, "Good fences make good neighbors".

For copies of the Line Fence Act, the Stray Animals Act or the Arbitration Act, contact your local Alberta Agriculture district office or the Farmers' Advocate's office in Edmonton.

The Alberta Farmers' Advocate can help resolve disputes and act as a mediator. As well, the Farmers' Advocate can provide advice on a varied range of topics. You can call the Farmers' Advocate's office in Edmonton at 427-2433, toll-free through your local government RITE operator.

Contact: Cliff Downey
427-2433

[Editor's note: If you use this article, please use the byline.]

Agri-News briefs

7th Bull Congress Jan. 22-23 in Camrose

The Canadian Bull Congress runs January 22 and 23 at the Camrose Regional Exhibition Centre. Originally known as the Camrose Bull Congress, the event is primarily a marketing and education program for purebred breeders and commercial operators. The congress offers private breeders an opportunity to promote their herd and breeding program and they are allowed to sell semen, bulls and heifers by private treaty. Each breed association has a space that includes an animal representative of their breed. Workshops and seminars are also part of the congress. The 1993 guest speaker is Peter Zarry, an advertising expert, who will discuss marketing strategies for the 1990s and for beef producers. There are also programs for elementary students and entertainment with an all breed steak challenge. An agricultural commercial trade show is also part of the congress. Among the other activities are a "super sire" avenue, pen of three bulls, farmers' market and Western Artists of Canada show. For more information contact the Camrose Regional Exhibition at 672-3640.

Fourth Alberta Farm Women's Conference Jan. 29-30

The Alberta Farm Women's Network will hold its fourth biennial conference January 29 and 30 in Edmonton. The network, and the conference's, objectives are to: enhance the role of women in agriculture in Alberta; promote unity of purpose among farm women; examine current issues of concern; tap and develop talent and energies of women who are part of agriculture in Alberta; and, develop lines of effective communication amongfarm women in Alberta and ultimately across Canada. The conference breakaway sessions are on self, the farm operation and the communication beyond the farm. Nominees for Alberta Farm Woman of the year will be introduced and the winner named at a luncheon on January 30. For more information, contact the Alberta Farm Women's Network at 9632-83 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6C 3A3, or call Janet Walter at 347-0660.

CARA holds crop production workshop January 27

The Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) will hold a crop production workshop January 27 in Oyen. Guest speakers for the day are: Doug Cornell of Alberta Agriculture discussing marketing strategies for lentils, canola and feed wheats; Dave Hutcheson, president of the Western Grower Seed Corporation, on sunola; Alberta Agriculture's Denise Maurice talking about water quality for spraying and future herbicide development; Rick Atkins of the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre will discuss developments in farm machinery; and, Mike Dolinski of Alberta Agriculture and Dan Johnson of Agriculture Canada will address biological control, integrated management and hands-on control of grasshoppers. As well as the featured speakers, there will be displays from chemical companies, fertilizer dealers and seed companies. Draws will be made throughout the day. For more information, contact Andrea Lowther in Oyen at 664-3777.

Foods, facts and the future

The Western Regional Conference of the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors will be held in Calgary on January 22. Under the umbrella theme of "food, facts and the future", conference participants will hear a number of speakers discuss issues such as whether diversification is a myth or reality, Western market survey results, strategies for the future, and nutrition as a focus for the '90s. For more information, contact Bryan Walton in Edmonton at 435-8823.

CFFA changes name, highlights mandate

The Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA) has changed its name to Earthkeeping: Food and Agriculture in Christian Perspective. The change was approved at the organization's 17th annual conference in Edmonton last month. The new name reflects the continuing commitment of the organization to caring for creation, while emphasizing that membership is open to both urban and rural people. Earthkeeping also continues the commitment to the biblical principles of justice, compassion and stewardship. Its purpose remains to continue research and policy work to discover the Christian perspective on agricultural and food issues, and to make the links between what we buy in Canada and how that impacts the people and the natural environment around the world. The renamed organization will also continue its educational work to help people understand their food comes the farm, not the store. It also encourages government policies that ensure food is produced, processed and distributed in ways that preserve the earth and its people, both locally and globally. For more information, contact Vern Gleddie, president, at 973-5627, or Kathryn Olson, research and policy co-ordinator at 428-6981.

Canola Producers Commission convention Jan. 17-19

The Alberta Canola Producers Commission will hold its annual convention January 17 through 19 in Edmonton. Keynote opening speaker is Murray Davis, marketing vice-president CanAmera Foods. Scheduled luncheon speakers are Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Tim Ball from the University of Winnipeg on long term weather trends. Among the topics on the convention agenda are oil and meal marketing, a tillage and harvesting panel, canola varieties, a review from the Canola Production Centres and an address from Dwight More, the Canola Council of Canada president. For more information, contact the commission office in Edmonton at 452-6487.

REDA leadership development workshops continue

The Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) is continuing its leadership development workshops. The level one workshop, jointly sponsored with the University of Alberta's extension faculty, will be held January 25 through 29 at the Goldeye Centre. Level one participants develop skills in communicating, public speaking and effective meeting management. For example, participants will learn how to make meetings productive and inviting at the same time, what to say when you have nothing to say and you're the speaker, and how to recruit people so they feel good about what they do and perform the task well. "People from a variety of backgrounds from across the province attend the Level I workshop," says Richard Stringham, the project co-ordinator. "The workshop has value for those with leadership experience and those wishing to become more involved in an organization. A large part of the success of the program is the sharing that takes place. Members of community associations find that they have much in common with farm organization leaders. The mix of age and experience levels adds both wisdom and fresh ideas." The 13th annual intermediate leadership skills (level two) workshop will run February 22 to 26. Level two participants learn skills for making effective presentations with visual aids and also discuss group decision making, power in leadership and issues in rural communities. Brochures and applications for the programs are available from REDA at 14815-119 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9, or by calling 451-5959.

Matching beef cattle to Western Environments Symposium

The Western Regional Co-ordinating Committee for Beef Cattle Genetics is hosting an international symposium offered in Phoenix on January 25 and 26 and in Calgary on January 28 and 29. The committee is a group of beef geneticists from western Canada and the U.S. Topics covered during the two day symposium include matching cattle to climatic environments, specific genetic and environmental effects on beef cattle, matching cattle to economic environments and matching cattle to managerial environments. Speakers are from universities, research stations, ranches and private industry in Alberta, Montana, New Mexico, Washington, Colorado and Texas. For more information, contact David Bailey at the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Lethbridge at 327-4561.